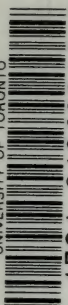
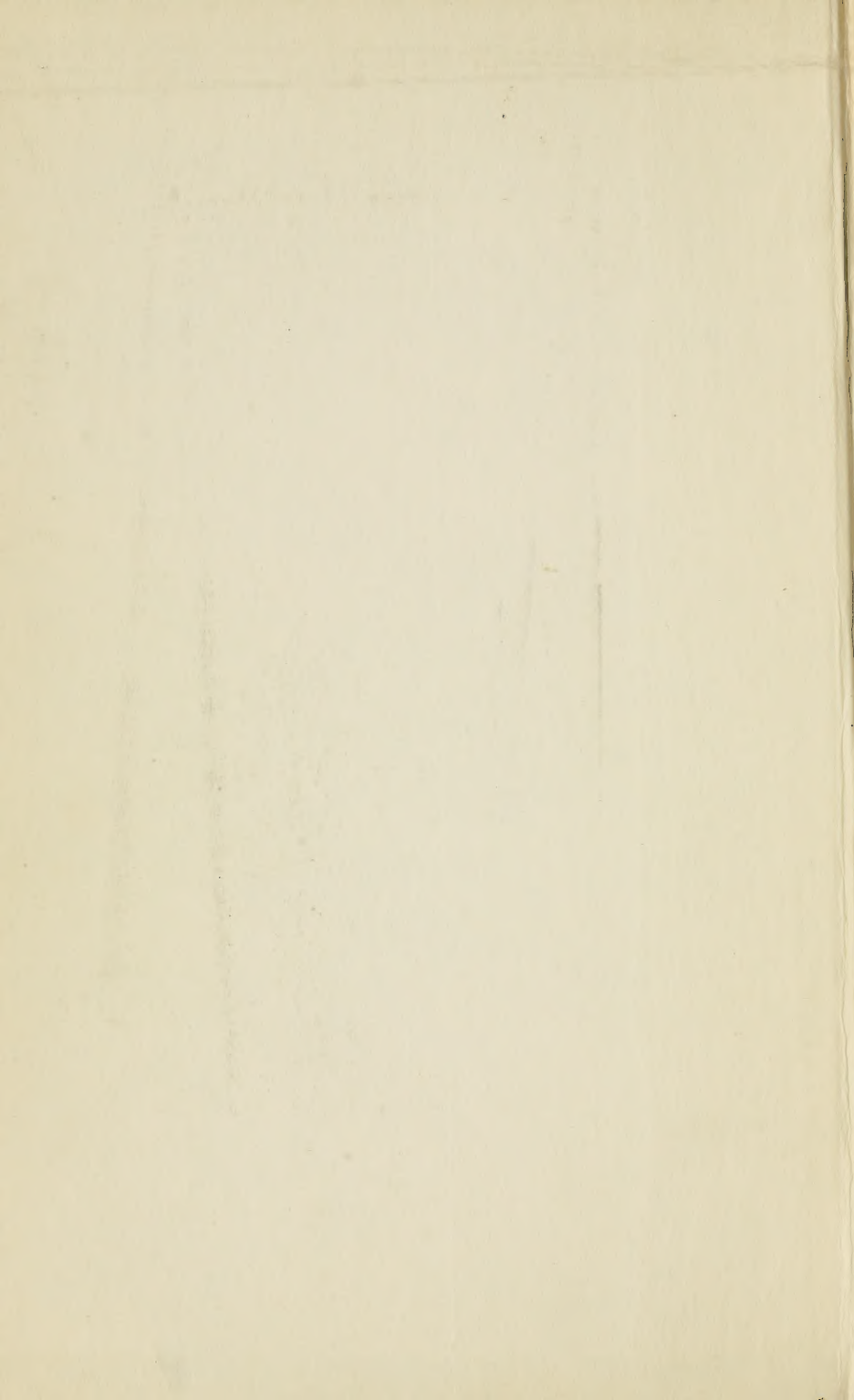



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BY

HECTOR MACPHERSON, JUN.,

Member of the Société Astronomique de France ; Member of the Société  
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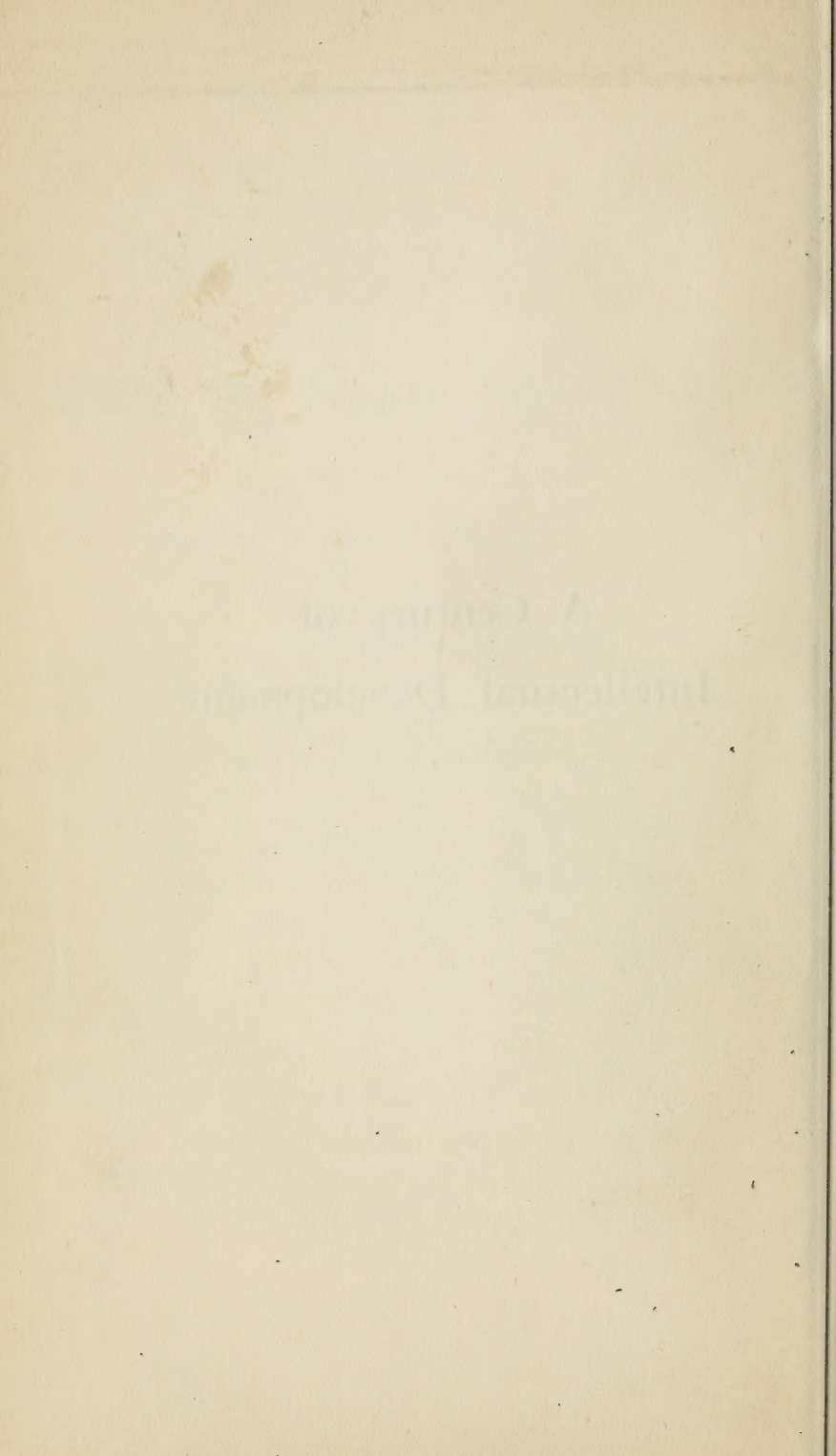
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A Century of  
Intellectual Development





# A Century of Intellectual Development

BY

HECTOR MACPHERSON

AUTHOR OF

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TO

*MY WIFE*



## P R E F A C E.

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WITH the exception of the last three chapters, the contents of this volume appeared originally in 'The Edinburgh Evening News.' The interest which the articles created when they appeared in that newspaper leads me to believe that they will be found of considerable value in their permanent form. The chapter on Socialism has already appeared in the form of a pamphlet, which was published under the auspices of the Young Scots Society.

I have to thank the directors of 'The Edinburgh Evening News,' Limited, for their permission to republish these articles.

H. M.

*April 1907.*





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# A CENTURY OF INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT.



## CHAPTER I.

### THE STARTING-POINT : FRENCH REVOLUTION.

IN handling a complex subject like a Century's Intellectual Development, a historical student has two courses open to him. He may content himself with splitting his subject into sections, and dealing with each section in the spirit of a narrator pure and simple. He may, for instance, trace in detail the development of theology, science, philosophy, and literature, leaving to the reader the task of welding the various fragments into a coherent whole. On the other hand, the historical student may essay the more difficult task of seizing the

dynamic principle of intellectual development, and tracing its working through the various departments of thought and life. In that case he aspires to the *rôle* of interpreter. The value of the latter method is that history, instead of being a chaos of unrelated facts, becomes an intelligible and luminous evolution. We discover the relations which exist between the various facts of history. Theology, philosophy, science, literature, are seen to be not unrelated fragments, but bound together in one organic unity. The key to history is no other than the principle of evolution, by means of which, as Spencer and Darwin have shown when applied to Nature, forces are only clearly understood when viewed in their reciprocal relations.

What, then, is the governing or dynamic principle in historical evolution? Taking a large view of history, it will be found that man's intellect is mainly occupied upon three great problems — God, the universe, and man as an individual and a social being. The controlling fact, however, in the process, is man's conception of the Unseen Power, upon which all things



rest, and of which nature and man are manifestations. If we conceive of an Unseen Power as a supernatural being who, by revelations, has made known His will to man, then philosophy, science, and literature will be moulded by, and permeated with, that conception. Even the social order will feel its powerful influence. Society will be framed on theocratic lines on the principle of authority. Roman Catholicism is an extreme form of the theocratic principle. The thinkers of the French Revolution, for instance, saw clearly that they could not overthrow Romanism by isolated or spasmodic attacks upon the outworks of the system. They felt that their real task lay in confronting the fundamental principle of Romanism with a principle equally fundamental. That is to say, the Revolution could only hope to succeed by opposing the supernatural by the natural, authority by reason.

In modern history there are two conspicuous landmarks, the Protestant Reformation and the French Revolution. To the hasty reader of history there is no obvious connection between the two landmarks. The Reformation in common

thought is associated with religion, the Revolution is looked upon as the incarnation of irreligion. Deeper study reveals the fact that between the two there is a close connection. It is admitted by competent thinkers that modern life in its various aspects—religious, philosophic, scientific, and literary—was largely moulded by the French Revolution, and that to understand the intellectual development of the past century we must go back to the great epoch-making forces of the Revolution. It is not so generally admitted that for the adequate understanding of the Revolution we must go back to the Reformation. What, then, on the intellectual side, was the Reformation? It was the revolt of Reason against mere dogmatic authority,—not merely the authority of the Church, but the authority of a social order which, under the name of Feudalism, ruled the secular, as the Church had ruled the spiritual, life of men. Put briefly, we might say that the Reformation denied the right of Romanism to impose religious beliefs upon the individual, and the Revolution denied the right of Feudalism to impose political and economic servitude

upon a society of individuals. The Reformation and Revolution were two aspects of a great liberating movement of the human mind—the one representing the spiritual and the other the secular side of life.

While in the main secular, it would be a mistake to overlook the fact that the Revolution aspired to be something higher than a mere reconstruction of the general order: it aimed at carrying the principles of the Reformation to what the Revolutionists conceived to be their logical issue, and to substitute for the supernatural theory of life, which was the foundation of the Reformation, a theory of life which may fitly be called Naturalism. In this work the Revolutionists were aided by the unsatisfactory manner in which the Reformation had developed, notably in England. In its earlier stages the Reformation was thoroughly consistent. While rejecting the Church of Rome, the Reformers had no intention of rejecting the supernatural theory of life upon which the Church was founded. What the Reformers did was to substitute the Bible for the Church as the ultimate authority in religious belief and

life. With the rise of science and scientific habits of thought in the eighteenth century, doubts began to assert themselves in the camp of Protestantism with regard to the Bible. In addition, the expanding intellectual and social forces of the eighteenth century refused to be controlled by the somewhat narrow ideals of Puritanism, which, by frowning upon philosophy and literature, and by drawing a sharp line between the sacred and the secular, helped to create a gulf between religion and culture. Out of this grew a desire among a section of the Protestant Church to find some way of establishing religion on a natural instead of a supernatural basis.

Accordingly we find in the eighteenth century an attempt to make Reason rather than Authority the bed-rock of religious belief. The result was to pare down as much as possible the supernatural element in religion, to exalt the ethical at the expense of the spiritual, to make natural rather than supernatural revelation the cornerstone of Protestantism. The outcome of this was Deism, the logical result of which was Naturalism. In England the transition was

gradual. The Deists had no intention of playing into the hands of the atheists. The Deists sought to preserve the essentials of true religion by cutting away from the popular creed what they deemed the fringes of superstition. What they really did was to push the supernatural so far into the background that it was lost sight of, thereby preparing the way for thoroughgoing thinkers like Hume, who declared that there was no such thing as the supernatural, and that the natural was all-in-all. Underlying the creed of Deism was the thought of the self-sufficiency of man. As the present writer has said elsewhere, "God was thought of as a monarch who had given the charge of the universe into the hands of second causes—a monarch who reigned, but did not govern. Man was endowed with reason, by the unaided light of which humanity was able to proceed on the pathway of perfectibility. External nature, too, was viewed in a mechanical way. Thus, wherever we look, whether in the science, the philosophy, the religion, the poetry, the general literature of the eighteenth century, we are struck with the same phenomena—the aloofness



of Deity, a mechanical view of the universe, and the self-sufficiency and self-complacency of man." The French thinkers were not slow in drawing the logical inference from Deism. If God, they said, reigned, but did not govern, why not abolish the supernatural figurehead altogether? If Reason, and not supernatural authority, is the guide of man, why not abolish every idea and institution which is shown to be irrational, and establish a creed and a social order in harmony with Reason?

Thus in the hands of the severely logical and passionately earnest French thinkers the philosophic Reason of Deism became the revolutionary Reason of Naturalism. Tried by the standard of Reason, man and society were in irrational bondage. Protestantism and Romanism alike traced the miseries of life to original sin, but Deism had made short work of that theory by coquetting with the idea of the natural goodness of man. "Man," says Rousseau, "is born free, but is everywhere in chains." Who forged the chains? A despotic Church and a despotic State. Priests and kings are the enemies of the human race, and until they are got rid of

the Age of Reason cannot be ushered in. Thus Materialism, from being simply a philosophy accepted and taught languidly by arm-chair thinkers, was transformed into a kind of revolutionary religion. Materialism, which formed the theoretic basis of the French Revolution, resembled religious fanaticism in its thoroughgoing attempt to reconstruct the social order. As Taine well remarks, the new religion was "to have its dogmas, its popular catechism, its fanatics, its inquisitors, and its martyrs. It differed, however, from all preceding religions in this respect, that instead of imposing itself in the name of God it imposed itself in the name of Reason."

The point to be specially noted is that the French Revolution holds a unique place in history, and is the key to the development of modern life, inasmuch as it was on a large scale a dramatic attempt to translate into practical life a logical and comprehensive theory of man and society. Up till the end of the eighteenth century Supernaturalism had been accepted as the true theory of man and as the basis of government. Supernaturalism at all points was

confronted with Naturalism, and a struggle of a lurid and portentous character took place for supremacy. The contrast between the contending theories of Man and Society may be put thus: By Naturalism Nature was viewed not as a divine creation, but as a piece of mechanism; man, not as a special creation, but the product of natural forces; not born degraded, but naturally good, and corrupted not by original sin, but by society; morality as embodied in Conscience not the voice of God within the soul, but a social expedient; government not a necessary condition of an imperfect and sinful humanity, and resting upon divine right, but an ingenious device of kings and priests to keep the people in intellectual and social slavery. The French Revolution was the direct and logical outcome of the philosophy of life known as Naturalism or Materialism. So far-reaching in its influence was the Revolution in the realm of ideas as in the sphere of practical life, that no understanding of the intellectual development of the past century is possible which does not take into full consideration the intellectual forces which made the Revolution possible. The French Revolution,

in a word, is the key to the complex intellectual life of the Nineteenth Century.

The great intellectual battle was really begun by Voltaire, though he stopped short of the Materialism of his followers. Voltaire turned the thinking mind of France away from theological explanations of the Universe and Man, and pointed to Science as the true guide. Seizing greedily upon the great discoveries of Newton, Voltaire advanced boldly to the idea that all phenomena were under natural law. Though never abandoning Deism, he virtually paved the way for the pivot-thought of Materialism—namely, that in the world of phenomena there was no trace of the supernatural. It is when we come to Holbach's 'System of Nature' that we find Roman Catholicism confronted with a life-system utterly antagonistic to it, and vying with it in absoluteness and comprehensiveness. The theocratic conception of life resting upon revelation was opposed by a democratic conception resting upon observation. The scientific spirit, which had been slowly making its way during the preceding centuries, became incarnated, so to speak, in Holbach's 'System of

Nature.' Holbach made war not only against theology, but also against metaphysics. In this aspect he anticipated Comte. Unlike Comte, Holbach was devoid of the historic sense,—a fact which makes his attack on Roman Catholicism as terrible as it was dramatic. So epoch-making was the book of Holbach, that once we get hold of its master-conception we have a clear insight into the science, philosophy, and general literature of the Revolution period.

What, then, is the gospel of Naturalism as preached by Holbach and his materialistic disciples? The Church rests upon belief in the existence of God, who had revealed His will to man. Holbach bade his readers dismiss all idea of beings outside of nature; and as for revelation, knowledge could come to man only by one way—namely, by observation. Science was substituted for Supernaturalism. Note how this fundamental conception determined all other conceptions. Philosophy, which had flourished under the patronage of the Church as the handmaid of religion, was dismissed without ceremony. No more through subjective thinking than through objective revelation can knowledge be acquired.



Science derived from experience through the senses was, according to Holbach, the only road to certainty. All else was illusion and delusion. What of morality? Morality has neither supernatural basis nor sanction; it has its roots in Social utility. What of original sin and free will? There are no such things. Man, says Holbach, is a part of Nature,—a superior piece of mechanism with a weak spring. Man, in short, is in the grip of a colossal fatalism. Immortality, belief in which was the solace of the afflicted in all ages, was ruthlessly swept aside by Holbach; man was no more immortal than the beasts of the field. What, then, is the duty of man? Inasmuch as man's miseries arise not out of original depravity, but out of the injustice of those of his fellows who had clutched the reins of power, man's duty was to overthrow iniquitous governments as a preliminary to the construction of a social state in which the people would have a taste of comfort and happiness. With great ferocity Holbach attacks existing society as follows: "The state of society is now a state of war of the sovereign against all, and of each of its members against the other. Man

is bad, not because he was born bad, but because he is made so ; the great and the powerful crush with impunity the needy and the unfortunate, and these in turn seek to repay all the ill that has been done to them. . . . By a sequence of human madness, whole nations are forced to labour, to sweat, to water the earth with their tears, merely to keep up the luxury, the fancies, the corruptions of a handful of insensates, a few useless creatures. So have religious and political errors changed the universe into a valley of tears." Here we have complete verification of our contention that men's general systems of thought and life, when viewed from the standpoint of history, are determined by their conception of the unseen Power. Believe that there is no such Power, or that it is indifferent to the fate of humanity, and you have a creed which will not only influence men's thought, but will also have far-reaching social consequences.

Along with gloomy views of human life as they saw it, the Revolution thinkers believed that in science they held the key of knowledge. The power to understand Nature led them to believe

in the power to utilise Nature for the benefit of man. Out of this grew the great Revolutionary doctrine of the perfectibility of man as the outcome of increased knowledge, leading to increased power over Nature. The Age of Faith was disappearing; the Age of Reason was at hand when man with the Key of Knowledge would enter the Temple of Justice and Happiness. This thought of the perfectibility of man through Reason was laid hold of with a fervour which we cannot understand. There is surely something touching in the spectacle of the hunted, persecuted Condorcet consoling himself in his last dreary hours with thoughts of the Paradise which the human race was about to enter. In ordinary circumstances such speculations would have had little practical effect, but in France at the time the conditions were of an inflammable kind, owing to political and economic causes. The educated classes were in revolt, and the people in such dire misery that the picture of the millennium dream of the Revolution thinkers served at once to captivate the imagination and inflame the passions of the people. The teachings of Voltaire, Rousseau, Condorcet, Diderot, Holbach,

and the band of anti-supernaturalists, were only too successful in overturning the entire social structure.

In the opinion of the world, the carnival of diabolism known as the French Revolution was the outcome of Materialism, which, as a natural consequence, fell into deep discredit. Apart from its social effects, Materialism did great harm to the individual by destroying, not merely the theological forms in which some of the highest feelings of the soul—reverence, gratitude, the sense of awe, the feeling of responsibility—had manifested themselves, but in destroying the feelings themselves. Novalis, in one of his essays, puts the case very aptly when he remarks that “the war which the Materialist waged against religion extended itself over all objects of enthusiasm in general. The Materialist,” he says, “proscribed fancy and feeling, morality and love of art, the future and the antique; placed man, with an effort, foremost in the series of natural productions, and changed the infinite creative music of the Universe into the monotonous clatter of a boundless Mill, which, turned by the stream of Chance, and swimming

thereon, runs a Mill of itself, without Architect or Miller, properly a genuine *perpetuum mobile*, a real self-grinding Mill." In one of his essays Carlyle thus describes the typical thinker of the Revolution school: "Reverence, the highest feeling that man's nature is capable of, the crown of his whole moral manhood, and precious, like fine gold, were it in the rudest forms, he seems not to understand or to have heard of even by credible tradition. . . . The Divine Idea, that which lies at the bottom of Appearance, was never more invisible to any man. He reads history not with the eye of a devout seer, or even of a critic, but through a pair of anti-Catholic spectacles. It is not a mighty drama being enacted in the theatre of Infinitude, with suns for lamp and Eternity as a background, whose author is God, but a poor, wearisome, debating-club dispute spun through ten centuries between the 'Encyclopédie' and the 'Sorbonne.' Wisdom or folly, nobleness or baseness, are really superstitions or unbelieving. God's Universe is a lay patrimony of St Peter from which it were well to hunt out the Pope." While giving due weight to the criticisms of Carlyle,



it is well to remember the great work which the thinkers of the Revolution period did in the propagation of knowledge. A fair critic of men like Diderot and Holbach would judge them not by the standpoint of to-day, but would contrast their views and labours with the narrow, crude, and superstitious creed which the Church of the time sanctioned and taught with a ferocious despotism.

## CHAPTER II.

## REVOLUTION THINKERS AND THEIR WORK.

NOTHING is easier than to pick holes in the theory of life of the Revolution thinkers. Their system of thought, while dominated by scientific conceptions, was erected upon the crudest philosophical basis. When the reaction came the philosophy of the Materialists was hopelessly riddled by the Germans. On the religious side the Revolution thinkers were exposed to the attack of Orthodoxy, which succeeded very effectively in bringing the doctrines of the Revolution School of thinkers into discredit. In the task of depreciation the religious world was greatly aided by Carlyle with his contemptuous references to the eighteenth century as a bankrupt century, a century of negation. In the midst of the general denunciation of the Materialists and their creed anything like a discriminating estimate of their

work was impossible. It was overlooked entirely that the value of their life-work was not destroyed when their particular system of thought was proved to be erroneous. The Revolution thinkers were the representatives of a principle which remains untouched by their own defective application of it, just as the principle of the Reformation remains untouched by the changing creeds of Protestantism. Both great movements—the Reformation and the Revolution—stood for two principles, upon whose free development depends the progress of humanity. The Reformation declared, as against the claims of Rome in the religious sphere, the right of man to think for himself in matters spiritual; the Revolution declared, as against the claims of Rome in things of the mind, the right of man to think for himself in matters intellectual. To put it in another way, the Reformation represented Spiritual Independence; the Revolution, Intellectual Independence. We do not forget that the battle for Intellectual Independence began long before the rise of the Revolution school of thought.

The initial impulse in the direction of intellectualism came from the Renaissance, and long

before the eighteenth century the Humanists had done good work in the sphere of intellectual liberation. But the work for the most part was sporadic and unorganised. The Church of Rome had ample means at its command to crush independent thinkers, as in the case of Galileo and Bruno. Humanists contented themselves with following their intellectual pursuits in matters of personal taste and temperament. They did not dream of leading the people in a revolution against the Church. As a class, the Humanists were at ease in Zion. They breathed the atmosphere of the drawing-room; they had no desire to become martyrs in the grim battlefield of humanity. When we come to the eighteenth century all is changed. Voltaire was a Humanist, but when we study his career we find ourselves in presence, not of a dilettante man of letters, but of the apostle of Intellectual Independence. In the name of humanity, he claimed the right to freedom of thought,—not only freedom to think differently from Romanism, but also from Protestantism. In the name of Reason, Voltaire claimed the right to examine alike the credentials of Roman-

ism and Protestantism. Voltaire felt, and felt truly, that no progress in the battle for Intellectual Independence was possible unless as a preliminary toleration was secured. No reformer ever threw himself more fervently into defence of his particular creed than did Voltaire in defence of toleration. Despotic authority and persecution stand and fall together, just as persuasive reason and toleration go hand-in-hand. Voltaire believed in the power of the human intelligence to discover knowledge, but without the freedom to exercise the power intellectual progress is impossible. He hated with a bitter and mocking hatred two kinds of tyranny,—that which dictated persecution for religious opinion, and that which prevented men from entering the temple of knowledge.

As the champion of Intellectual Independence, Voltaire fought against all kinds of repression. In the words of Mr John Morley: "He had imagination enough and intelligence enough to perceive that they are the most pestilent of all the enemies of mankind, the sombre hierarchy of misology, who take away the keys of knowledge, thrusting truth down to the second place, and discrowning sovereign reason to be the serving



drudge of superstition or social usage. The system which threw obstacles in the way of publishing an exposition of Newton's discoveries and ideas was as mischievous and hateful to him as the darker bigotry which broke Calas on the wheel because he was a Protestant." Voltairism was essentially an intellectual movement. Voltaire was the apostle of reason. He had no desire to overturn the social order; his desire was rather to overturn the huge ecclesiastical system which for so long had mutilated the powers of the mind and paralysed reason. That he was a mocker, that he assailed the fundamental beliefs of Romanists and Protestants alike, are from the standpoint of the history of intellectual development of less account than the one outstanding fact that Voltaire did heroic battle for the sovereign rights of Reason, and for his magnificent work in this sphere he deserves to be held in everlasting honour. But behind the question of the rights of Reason lay another and more pressing question—the rights of Man. In the earlier days of the Humanist movement little was said about the rights of Man. By pedantic thinkers engrossed in abstract studies, and dilettantes, literary triflers,

the people were spoken of as "the vulgar"—mere hewers of wood and drawers of water. The people had little to hope for from the Humanists, who utilised them mainly for literary and artistic purposes. Voltaire humanised Intellectualism. He brought it into touch with the vital facts of daily life.

It was reserved for another of the Revolution thinkers—Rousseau—to urge the claims of the people, and in so doing to give completeness to the humanitarian movement of Voltaire. Voltaire, by opposing Reason to the claims of Rome, had destroyed the theocratic basis of Society. If the Church is not the representative of God upon earth, acting with delegated authority, if the social order does not rest upon and is not under the guidance of the Church, upon what does it rest? Voltaire the Intellectualist did not raise the question. It was raised by Rousseau, and in raising it he sowed the seeds of the Revolution. Society, says Rousseau, has no theocratic basis; it rests upon a social contract—upon the will of the people. Rousseau, in a word, sounded the note of Democracy. Thus we have in Voltaire Reason placed in opposition

to Authority, and in Rousseau Democracy opposed to Theocracy. Has not the phrase "the sovereignty of the people" quite a revolutionary ring? Coming events cast their shadows before. It is not our business to analyse the political and social theories of Rousseau. He was not an original nor a clear thinker. His inconsistencies and crudities have been exposed in detail by Mr John Morley and other writers, who have shown how potent was the influence of Hobbes and Locke upon Rousseau. What we are concerned about here is to note the fact that the impulse which Voltaire gave, and which he applied in the region of intellect, was extended by Rousseau to the social order. In England such speculations had no revolutionary effect, but falling as they did upon a society seething with discontent, and pursuing a swift road to social and political liberation, they acted like sparks upon gunpowder. The people were no longer hewers of wood and drawers of water. The people, in their collective capacity, were sovereign.

Out of this new conception of the people grew another idea which was put forward by Condorcet, "that all institutions ought to have

for their aim the physical, intellectual, and moral amelioration of the poorest and most numerous class,"—namely, the People. This combination of Voltairism and Rousseauism formed the groundwork of the labours of Diderot and his fellow-helpers, and took shape in the famous "Encyclopedia." Voltaire had shown the paramount importance of knowledge. Rousseau had shown the paramount importance of the people; it now remained for the Encyclopedists to enlist the people on the side of knowledge as the most effective way of undermining the old order, which rested on Authority and Superstition, and on its ruins erecting the new order, resting upon Reason and Science. Diderot, like Comte, was a great constructive genius. He had not Comte's supreme talent for systematic thought, but, like Comte, he was inspired with the belief that it was possible to reorganise society on the basis of scientific knowledge. We might call Diderot an Eighteenth Century Positivist. The Humanists laid great stress upon intellectualism, but it was an intellectualism of an isolated kind. Diderot sought to socialise the intellectual spirit, to bring knowledge to bear upon social needs. He held firmly

to the truth that isolation in matters of knowledge meant social sterility; "to be strong we must march together." Diderot, who, in the *Encyclopedia*, had associated with him a man of distinct genius, D'Alembert, sought to present knowledge in its various aspects — scientific, philosophic, ethical, social, political, economic, and literary,—all animated by the new positive, or rather materialistic, spirit, so as to make it a comprehensive antagonist to the supernaturalism of the Church.

In addition, it was the aim of Diderot and his co-workers not merely to undermine the Church, but to lay the basis of a new social order resting upon humanitarianism. In this work Diderot laboured heroically. Persecution, misrepresentation, poverty, never daunted his noble spirit nor cooled his fervid efforts in the cause of social amelioration. We are not called upon here to criticise the "*Encyclopedia*" from the standpoint of modern knowledge. What concerns us is the part which it played in intellectual development. In spite of all their errors and their fanaticism, Diderot and his colleagues did an important work in two directions,—they gave a great impulse to the scientific spirit, and they



brought into prominence the new idea of social regeneration through the discovery and application of Knowledge to human affairs.

In a very short time the harvest of the labours of the Encyclopedists was reaped in France in the shape of widespread activity of the scientific spirit. So rapid was the progress of Intellectualism under the influence of Diderot and his school that a competent authority, Mr Merz, has stated that in France during the early part of the nineteenth century the foundation of nearly all the modern sciences was laid. In his remarkable work, 'History of European Thought in the Nineteenth Century,' Mr Merz bears testimony as follows to the great work done by French thinkers: "France was the country in which the modern scientific methods of measurement calculation and classification were first practised on a large scale, reduced to a system and employed for the investigation of the whole of Nature. It was in France, also, that the discoveries of the laboratory were first applied so as to contribute to the revolution of arts and industries. In all its different expressions—in the production of works

of classical perfection, in substance, and in form ; in its application to the problems of life and society, and its influence on general literature—we find the scientific spirit, as we know it, fully established in France in the beginning of the century.”

While admitting to the full the indebtedness of modern thought to the Revolution thinkers, we must also admit that their work was greatly marred by the fact that they valued science, not mainly for its own sake, but chiefly because it enabled them to make a determined and concentrated attack upon Romanism, which in their mind was the origin and embodiment of the evils from which Society was suffering. Inasmuch as Romanism as a religion and as a social force rested upon belief in God as the creator, upholder, and director of the scheme of things, the efforts of the Revolution thinkers were naturally directed to the overthrow of this fundamental belief. How was this to be done? Clearly by showing that the material of which the Universe is composed possessed within itself all the powers necessary for the production of all natural phenomena, including man and society. From the nature of the case the

Revolution thinkers were compelled to approach the problem in the spirit of science; they were driven to seek a natural as opposed to a supernatural explanation of the Cosmos. The urgency of the work, the passions which it raised, and the revolutionary spirit with which it was inspired, prevented the thinkers of the Revolution from proceeding by strictly scientific methods. Holbach, for example, whose 'System of Nature' is the embodiment of the materialism of the time, begins his great task by the speculative or metaphysical rather than by the scientific method. God, averred the theologians, is eternal, and the source of all things. No, replied Holbach, Matter is eternal, outside of which nothing exists. Motion, which is one of the inherent and constitutional qualities of Matter, is also eternal. All phenomena, from the simplest to the most complex, are the result of the action, reaction, and combination of the elements of matter in course of its ceaseless motion. At once we are struck by the close resemblance between these speculations and those of the old Greek philosophers with their personified abstractions which could not be subjected to verification by means of scientific method.

To say in a general way, after the style of Holbach, that Matter and Motion produce all natural phenomena by their infinite variety and combination, does not create conviction, and certainly does not advance appreciably the cause of science. We want to know with precision what are the properties of Matter and the laws of Motion, otherwise we shall never get beyond a vague surface knowledge of the Universe. It was felt by thinkers who were inspired by the genuine scientific spirit that progress was impossible until all attempts to understand the Universe were dissociated from purely polemical attacks upon religion. Such attacks, to be effective on the popular mind, were bound to be conducted in a partisan spirit, and imposing speculations and brilliant but superficial generalisations were sure to appeal more to the multitude than calm scientific expositions and rigorous demonstrations. Out of dissatisfaction with the methods of the School of Holbach arose a desire among strictly scientific students in France to avoid religious and political controversies, and to concentrate attention solely upon facts and theories which were capable of verification. The dif-

ference between the two schools may be seen in their different attitudes towards the labours of Newton. Voltaire, Diderot, and Holbach laid great store upon Newton's discovery of the law of gravitation, because by it they were enabled to strike a blow at the vital part of the supernatural theory of the Universe, upon which the hated system of theocratic despotism rested. The purely scientific school, turning away from contentious questions, rejoiced in Newton, because he had reduced a large sphere of Nature's operations to an exact science: he had, so to speak, brought to the sphere of verifiable knowledge a law of universal extent. The attraction and repulsion of atoms were favourite expressions of metaphysical science, but "attraction and repulsion" were of no scientific value so long as they remained occult qualities beyond the reach of exact knowledge.

As has been well said, a scientific explanation is a hypothesis which admits of verification—it can be either proved or disproved; while a metaphysical explanation is a hypothesis which does not admit of verification—it can neither be proved nor disproved. In the words of George



Henry Lewes, a theory may be transferred from science to metaphysics simply by the withdrawal of the verifiable element. Withdraw the formula inversely as the square of the distance and directly as the mass, and attraction is left standing a mere occult quality. The strictly scientific school of France, while grateful to the Revolution thinkers for the impulse they had given to the scientific spirit, turned away from their methods and took their stand upon the foundation which had been laid by Newton. In popularising the Newtonian theory, England did little compared with France and Scotland. It is gratifying to know that David Gregory introduced the 'Principia' to Edinburgh students. He was the first to give public lectures in Edinburgh on the Newtonian theory, thirty-five years before it was accepted as part of the public instruction in Newton's own University. Gregory was followed by Maclaurin, who, in championing Newton, not only added lustre to Edinburgh University, but made for himself a European reputation. Great as was the influence of individual thinkers in Scotland and France during the early part of the eighteenth

century, it is not too much to say that to the impulse given to the scientific method of the Revolution, in union with the scientific method of Isaac Newton, the great advance in science during the first half of the nineteenth century is mainly due. So far as the branch of science known as Physics is concerned, the statement is literally true. If modern thinkers are no longer content with vague speculations about matter and motion, the fact is due to the great labours of Newton, in bringing the physical side of nature out of the metaphysical into the scientific arena.

## CHAPTER III.

## THE MECHANISM OF THE UNIVERSE.

LONG before Newton, thinkers of scientific eminence had pondered the stupendous problem of the mechanism of the Universe. The first step towards an understanding of the problem was taken by Copernicus, who showed that the Earth—which had hitherto been considered the centre of the Universe—and the other planets were in revolution round the Sun. Thanks to the observations of the Danish astronomer Tycho Brahe, Kepler was enabled, early in the seventeenth century, to enunciate his three famous laws of planetary motion. He was able to describe and define the motions of the planets on the basis of the Copernican system, but he failed to explain why the planets moved round the Sun. After Kepler's death various attempts were made to explain planetary motions, chiefly by Huyghens

and Halley; but the explanations were reserved for Newton. In his 'Principia,' Newton explained all the phenomena of the planetary system on the basis of gravitation; Kepler's laws were shown to be merely the necessary consequences of the law of gravitation. By his epoch-making discovery Newton put an end, in the name of scientific method, to all vague speculations about the Cosmos, by bringing within the sweep of one universal law the hitherto bewildering phenomena of the heavens. Newton, in a word, demonstrated the unity of the Solar System. He showed that the masses of matter in the Solar System were not isolated, but were parts of a colossal mechanism, all united by a force called gravitation, whose nature as yet baffles explanation, but whose mode of action can be calculated with scientific accuracy.

One step more and we come to Herschel, who, by the aid of his great telescopes, was enabled to discern revolving suns in the heavens, thus showing that the law of gravitation held good not only in the Solar System, but throughout the entire Universe. Herschel's discoveries

proved conclusively that gravitation was not a mere local arrangement, but was the fundamental law of the entire Cosmos. The Universe which, as Newton, supplemented by Herschel's labours, shows, is characterised by unity of plan and substance. Still following the scientific method, we hope also to show that the forces of the Universe are reducible to unity. Yet another unity has to be added—the unity of process, which, under the name of evolution, is specially associated with Herbert Spencer. If we can manage to bring the bewildering facts of science in its various departments within the sweep of these four unities,—unity of plan, unity of substance, unity of force, and unity of process,—we shall have gone a good way in constructing, from the chaos of scattered and unconnected knowledge, something like a mental picture of the great fundamental laws which underlie the Cosmos, the real nature and cause of which, however, science is powerless to comprehend.

Newton's great discovery was the starting-point of a train of scientific thought and observation to which we owe the modern conception of the Universe. It was Newton's dis-



covery, for instance, that led Kant on the track of the Nebular theory. In the words of Helmholtz : "It was Kant who, feeling great interest in the physical description of the earth and the planetary system, had undertaken the laborious study of the works of Newton ; and as evidence of the depth to which he had penetrated into the fundamental ideas of Newton, seized the masterly idea that the same attractive force of all ponderable matter which now supports the motion of the planets must also aforesaid have been able to form the planetary system from matter loosely scattered in space. Afterwards, and independently of Kant, Laplace, the great author of the '*Mécanique Céleste*,' laid hold of the same thought, and introduced it among astronomers."

In the words of a recent writer : "Laplace noticed that in the Solar System all the planets revolved round the sun in the same direction, from west to east, and that the satellites of the planets obeyed the same law. He also observed that the sun, moon, and planets rotated on their axes in the same direction as they revolved round the sun ; also that the planets moved round the sun, and the satellites round their primaries, in

almost the same plane as the earth's orbit, the plane of the ecliptic. It was evident that these remarkable congruities were not the result of chance, and accordingly Laplace expressed his belief that the Solar System originated from a great nebula which, in condensing, detached various rings in the process of rotation. These rings condensed into the various planets and their satellites." Laplace was too much of a scientist to advance his view as anything more than a hypothesis. He put forth in his own words what he called his conjectures, "with all the distrust which everything which is not a result of observation or of calculation ought to inspire."

The credit of bringing the theory within the range of practical astronomy belongs to Herschel, who not only pointed out the *nebulæ* in the sky, but developed the theory independently of Laplace. Herschel did not reach the nebular theory by a process of reasoning like Kant and Laplace. He was led to it by his observations of the stars and of *nebulæ* extending over many years. In 1791, referring to his observations on a certain nebulous star, he remarked that "the

envelope of a cloudy star is more fit to produce a star by its condensation than to depend upon the star for its existence." This was the first hint that Herschel gave of a possible evolution of the celestial bodies; and it was not till 1796 that Laplace put forward his theory in his 'Système du Monde.' In 1811 Herschel fully developed his hypothesis. In a certain sense it was substantially the same as that of Laplace: it stipulated for the existence of a gaseous medium in space which was to condense into stars and nebulae. Herschel did not go into details like Laplace. He contented himself with sketching the evolution of numerous systems scattered throughout space, and with describing the various stages of planetary evolution from the primitive nebula. Laplace merely utilised the hypothetical nebula to explain the development of the Solar System. Herschel showed that there were countless numbers of such nebulae scattered throughout space, and he proved development from a primitive nebula to be not merely a local law for the Solar System, but to be the rule of evolution throughout the Universe.

For many years the question remained just where Herschel left it. Laplace and Herschel had both powerfully aided the theory of the development of the Universe, but the sceptics had still a weapon of defence—namely, the argument that the nebulæ, or cloudy spots, might be, not masses of gas, but merely clusters of stars reduced to nebulosity by immensity of distance. With the supposed resolution of some of these nebulæ into stars numbers of astronomers abandoned the nebular theory altogether. Only a few brave men stood out to champion the hypothesis, and it is an interesting fact that foremost among these champions was the Scottish astronomer Nichol. Nichol not only held to the theory, but he further developed it, weaving it into a comprehensive conception of the development of the entire Universe. But Nichol was a voice crying in the wilderness, and when he died in 1859 astronomical opinion was set against the nebular theory.

Even Herschel's own son abandoned it. Nichol died in September 1859; two months later Kirchhoff at Heidelberg announced the outcome of the first researches with the spectroscope—

namely, that the elements which we know on the earth existed on the sun. This was in itself a powerful argument in favour of the common origin of the Solar System. Then, in 1863, Huggins identified similar elements in the brighter stars; but the final proof came in 1864, when Huggins turned his spectroscope on the nebulæ. The instrument demonstrated once for all the presence of glowing gas in the universe, as Herschel believed. The last great objection to the nebular theory was removed, and the nebulæ were proved to be not merely clusters of stars, but real glowing matter in the earlier stages of its existence. The spectroscope demonstrated two things — the presence of rudimentary gaseous matter, to whose condensation and evolution the entire celestial system is due; and the identity of the elements with the matter of which our own planet is composed. Newton had proved the universality of law; the spectroscope proved identity of substance.

The net result of a century's development in this department may be stated thus: Newton closed one chapter in astronomy; Herschel opened another. Newton discovered the law of gravita-



tion, and showed that it held universal sway throughout the Solar System; Herschel discovered the Stellar Universe, and showed that through it also the law of gravitation reigned supreme. Thus, by one great generalisation, the motions of the heavens, which had baffled even the great Kepler, were reduced to unity. Further, in the hands of Kant, Laplace, and Herschel the Newtonian law of gravitation was used as a key to unlock the problem of the evolution of the Universe. Not only was it shown that the celestial orbs were held in their places by the law of gravitation, but by the same law those same orbs were shown to have originated out of the primitive nebula, whose existence was demonstrated by Herschel's magnificent telescopic observations and by the spectroscope. The nebular theory was placed on a rock-like basis when the various stars were shown to be formed of elements identical with those on the Earth, and were classified in the various stages of their development. In addition to all this, another outcome of a century's development in this department of science falls to be noted. Long after the time of Newton, astronomers concen-

trated their attention upon the Solar System and its problems. Even where the stars were studied it was more for the purpose of determining the position of the Sun and Moon, and to assist navigation, than from a genuine curiosity about sidereal science.

Herschel may be said to be the creator of sidereal science. In his own words, he "looked farther into space than ever human being did before him." Herschel's epitaph claims for him that "he broke through the barriers of the skies." Copernicus and Newton vastly expanded man's conception of space; Herschel revealed infinity and eternity. The work which he did has been carried on by a large and ever-increasing host of astronomers, who, with telescope, spectroscope, and camera, are daily exploring the infinite regions opened up by the epoch-making genius of Herschel. So successful have been the application of Herschel's methods, that we now approximately know the size and shape of the stellar universe. Modern astronomers like Newcomb and Gore have expressed the immense distance and size in figures which only baffle and bewilder the mind. As an instance of the

overpowering effect of figures, take the calculation of Gore, who regards the Solar System as a system of the first order, and what is known as the Galaxy and its fellow-universes of the second order. He makes a calculation of the possible distance of our external universe of the second order, and reaches the astounding conclusion that the distance of the nearest galaxy is no less than 520,149,600,000,000,000 miles—a distance which light, with its inconceivable velocity of 186,000 miles a second, would take almost ninety millions of years to traverse. For an adequate conception of the vastness of the Immensities and Eternities which are opened up by modern astronomy, we must have recourse to the beautifully descriptive language of Mr Gore in his 'Visible Universe': "Could we speed our flight through space on angel wings beyond the confines of our limited universe to a distance so great that the interval which separates us from the remotest fixed star visible in our largest telescopes might be considered as merely a step on our celestial journey, what further creations might not then be revealed to our wondering vision! Systems of a higher order

might there be unfolded to our view, compared with which the whole of our visible heavens might appear like a grain of sand on the ocean shore,—systems perhaps stretching out to infinity before us, and reaching at last the glorious mansions of the Almighty, the Throne of the Eternal.”

## CHAPTER IV.

## THE CONSTITUTION OF MATTER.

IN the history of scientific thought we can trace three clearly marked stages. First comes the stage when phenomena, apart from all theorising, occupy the attention of the observer. In astronomy, for instance, a great stride was made when by means of the telescope exact knowledge was obtained of the various bodies which compose the Solar System. After observation had so far done its work, the scientific mind advanced to another stage which is associated with the genius of Newton. That the celestial orbs are closely related to one another, that they move in harmony in obedience to one universal law, was admitted, but the question arose, What is the nature of this law? Newton's discovery was the answer to this question. A third stage was entered upon when the scientific mind began



to try whether the discovery made by Newton could not be used to explain not merely the movements but the origin of the Solar System. Out of this grew the Nebular theory, which rests upon the view that the Solar System, under the influence of gravitational force, reached its present form through a process of development from primitive gaseous matter. This started the scientific mind on an entirely new track. The idea of seeking the origin of the Solar System in some form of evolution from universally diffused gaseous matter, naturally concentrated attention upon matter, as we find it existing upon our own planet. The marvellous diversity of matter as we know it was, when rigorously analysed, found to be reducible to some seventy or eighty elements, whose numberless combinations cause the marvellous variety of Nature. Those elements were called manufactured articles. They were the ultimates, so to speak, of the Universe; special creations beyond which science could not go, just as before the time of Kant and Laplace, the belief was that the orbs which constitute the Solar System were originally created as we now see them. For all practical purposes

Chemistry, with its elements, was sufficient, just as for the purposes of practical astronomy it was not necessary to go beyond the Solar System as it now exists.

But the scientific mind craves unity. The Nebular theory was the expression of this craving, and a further step in the direction of unity was taken when the discovery was made of the identity of substance throughout the Universe. Of the same material all things are woven. As one writer has it, "the chemistry of all parts of space is the same." Naturally out of this discovery grew a strong desire to study the elements to which the multiform varieties of material phenomena had been reduced. If the planets, which were once believed to be special creations, had been traced to a common origin, was it not possible in like manner to get behind the seventy or eighty elements or atoms of Matter and trace their evolution from some earlier and simpler form? In thinking of the atomic theory we must remember that it had plausible support from the school of Newton. In fact, Newton himself gave expression to the view that "God in the beginning

formed Matter in solid, hard, impenetrable, movable particles of such size and figures and with such other properties, and in such proportion to space, as most to conduce to the end for which He formed them; and that those primitive particles being solid and incomparably harder than any previous bodies compounded of them, even so very hard as never to wear or break in pieces, no ordinary power was able to divide what God Himself made one in the first creation." Here, in substance, is the atomic theory. Naturally scientists began to apply to the infinitely little the gravitation formula which they found so successful in dealing with the infinitely great. Distinguished thinkers in France and Germany laboured hard to explain by means of the formula of attraction and repulsion complex molecular phenomena. Newton's great name could not prevent thinkers from seeking a deeper view of Nature than that afforded by the atomic theory, which, it should be noted, in the hands of Dalton formed an epoch in chemical science.

Sooner or later the questions were bound to arise: Are these atoms really the primary forms of Matter? or must we continue the search till

we resolve the seventy or eighty elements into some all-embracing form? The atomic theory takes its rise in a conception which commends itself to the ordinary observer of Nature. The impression which the observer first forms of Nature is, that it is composed of numerous independent passive substances which are energised by independent forces. Of the actual existence of Matter as an independent substance the observer entertains no doubt. Matter is supposed to exist in three forms—solid, liquid, and gaseous—each with its different properties, to which the individuality of objects is thought to be due. The atomic theory is based upon the idea of Matter as made up of substances incomprehensively small, to whose properties and chemical combinations the complexity of the Cosmos is due. Let us examine the so-called properties of atoms. That hardness is a property of the atom is not doubted by the man of science. But what is hardness? It is not a property at all—it is a relation. Hardness is simply the measure of the resistance offered to the separation of molecules from one another. Obviously, there is no sense in talking

of hardness in a single atom. Again, we cannot conceive of atoms apart from colour of some kind. But what is colour? Is it a property of matter? It is due to certain vibratory motions in the atoms, and is related to the rate of energy. If all substances were at absolute zero in temperature there would be no vibratory motions, and consequently no colour. Substance itself would be invisible. The same holds good of inertia, mass, heat—the primary as well as the secondary properties—which are no longer viewed as properties but as conditions of Matter.

Matter is not a thing but a state, and except in relation has no existence. No force in Nature can be isolated from other forces. As has been said, “what we call solids, liquids, and gases, with all the laws that belong to each of them, are simply the relations of heat-energy to groups of atoms, not the properties or laws that may be asserted of atoms as such.” Nature resolves itself into a scene of unvarying activity, and what appears to us to be distinct existences, isolated and independent, are really relative conditions of that activity. We are now arriving



at the time anticipated by Lord Kelvin, when we shall have "a complete theory of Matter; when all its properties will be seen to be merely attributes of Motion." For this view of Nature we are indebted to the theory of the Conservation and Transformation of Forces—which on the philosophic side rests on the idea that Nature is not an assemblage of existences, but a bundle of forces whose existences are known to us by the relative states in which they manifest themselves. Helmholtz expresses the dynamic conception of Nature when he says, "Every property or quality of a thing is in reality nothing but its capability of producing certain effects on other things." This, which may be called the dynamic as opposed to the mechanical theory of Matter, was the outcome of a remarkable train of scientific thought of Joule, Mayer, and Helmholtz. These thinkers by demonstrative methods destroyed once for all the notion that Matter was an independent substance possessed of certain properties, when they showed that heat was not a property of Matter, but a mode of motion. Naturally the thought arose—If heat is not a property of Matter, but simply a manifestation

of another kind of motion, may not the same thing hold true of other so-called properties of Matter—light, electricity, magnetism? What if it should turn out that all the so-called properties of Matter are simply modes of motion? It was just a step to the great doctrine of the Conservation and Convertibility of Force, or, as it is now called, Energy. Further investigation added increased weight to the new generalisation. The investigations of scientists like Clerk-Maxwell, Helmholtz, and Hertz into the electromagnetic theory of light go to prove that we are dealing not with properties of matter, but with undulations or vibrations of energy. Maxwell, indeed, proved that the ethereal undulations which produce the phenomenon which we call light differ from the pulsation of magnetism only in their wave-length. It is now an established fact “that all forms of radiant energy, whatever their exact affinities, consist essentially of undulating motions of one uniform medium.”

The investigations into the nature of electricity have further revolutionised our notions of the atom. Moreover, the strange phenomena

known as the Cathode rays, the Lenard rays, the Rontgen rays, and the marvellous powers of Radium, have completely broken down the old conception of the atom. Here we see the atom, which was supposed to be indestructible, the corner-stone of the Universe, so to speak, in process of disintegration, and in the process liberating an enormous store of energy. Out of dissatisfaction with the atomic conception sprang, too, the attempt of Lord Kelvin, by his famous vortex-ring theory, to show how Matter itself may have been evolved from the ether. More extraordinary still, we have attempts to show that the atom is not an ultimate, but is composed of corpuscles, of which about five hundred go to make an atom of hydrogen. The dynamical view of Nature entirely changes our conception of Matter, which is no longer primary but derivative: it is built up out of our conception of force. Forces, standing in correlation, as Spencer remarks, form the whole context of our idea of Matter. Thus we come to the conclusion that the multi-form energies of Nature are reducible to one form of energy, protean in its manifestations,

and to whose conservation and transformation all phenomena are due. From this point of view the idea of unity of substance, to which we were led by our study of the Nebular theory, merges into the idea of the unity of force. So far, we have treated of three generalisations of science—Gravitation, the Nebular Theory, and Conservation of Energy. These great generalisations Herbert Spencer fused into one, which, under the name of Evolution, he used as a means of demonstrating the unity of the Cosmos.

## CHAPTER V.

## THE EVOLUTION THEORY.

IF we wished to contrast the two conceptions which dominated the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries respectively, we should call the one mechanical and the other dynamical. Just as in so far as the latter conception became prominent did the possibility seem nearer of getting to the unity of things. If we abide by the mechanical view, it is difficult to reach the idea of unity. Between the various parts of a machine there need be no necessary connection; the unity is in the mind of the constructor rather than in the machine itself. But the moment we reach the dynamical point of view we substitute the idea of growth for that of manufacture, and the various parts are seen to be organically instead of mechanically united. To Newton's law of gravitation we owe the mechanical conception of



the Universe—a conception which only began to lose its supreme influence by the establishment of the Nebular theory, and the theory of the conservation and transformation of energy.

These led the scientific mind to think of the Universe as the outcome of a great process of evolution from a simple to a complex state. With the new view the name of Herbert Spencer is imperishably associated. It has been well said that to a thinker capable of comprehending it from a single point of view, the Universe would present itself as a single fact, one all-comprehensive truth. Spencer viewed the universe as one fact—namely, the redistribution of Matter and Motion; and his lifework consisted in the attempt to trace in all departments of existence the one dominating idea of cosmical unity. The system of Spencer is too vast to be treated in detail here. All that is necessary is to emphasise the fact that Spencer was the most systematic exponent of the new dynamic view of Nature—a view which, as has been already said, is a characteristic development of the past century.

It would take us too far afield to apply

the evolution formula to the inorganic side of Nature: enough for our present purpose to dwell upon the marvellous effect of the new view in the sphere of biology and kindred sciences. Here we come upon aspects of the problem which confronted scientists in dealing with the physical side of Nature. If the Solar and Stellar systems, and the material of which they are composed, were not created as we now see them, but were evolved from earlier and simpler states, why should not the organic world follow the same process? During the closing years of the eighteenth and the opening years of the nineteenth centuries the evolution idea, so to speak, was in the air. Goethe, whose poetic temperament naturally leaned to the dynamic view of Nature, favoured the evolution theory, and in the application of it he made some happy discoveries in science. On the same line ran the speculations of the Natural Philosophy of Oken, Schelling, and Hegel, but scientific treatment of the subject was still wanting. In 1844 appeared a book entitled 'Vestiges of Creation.' The author is now known to be Mr Robert Chambers, who in a vague but suggestive way applied

the idea of development to nature. Chambers had no scientific clue to the process; he got no further than the surmise that "an impulse was imparted to the forms of life advancing them in definite lines by generation, through grades of organisation, terminating in the highest plants and animals."

The real scientific conflict between the old and the new views began with the famous dispute between Cuvier and St Hilaire. Cuvier clung to the view that the marvellous varieties of plant and animal life were explainable only on the grounds of distinct species, just as the older school of physicists believed in the special creation of material bodies. St Hilaire, on the other hand, contended for unity of plan in the organic world. Cuvier's view was entirely driven off the field when in 1840 Schwann, as the result of microscopic observations, proclaimed the essential identity of animal and vegetable structures. This epoch-making discovery was led up to by Schleiden, who showed "that plants were built up of cells and modifications of cells. He discovered the origin of the plant embryo to be a single cell or ovum." Schwann widened the

generalisation to include animal life, thus establishing under the name of the cell theory the unity of organic life. For a time the cell theory held in biology the place which the atom held in physics: the cell was treated as an ultimate.

But just as the atom within recent years has been found to be not simple but complex,—an evolution from some simpler form of matter, under the name of corpuscles,—so the cell is now recognised as a “unified living corpuscle of complex substances.” In dealing with atoms, we saw that the latest scientific thought had reduced them to temporary incarnations or centres of force, and now, according to an authority like Professor Arthur Thomson, “the central corpuscles in animal cells seem to act as if they were centres of force.” In dealing with Matter, we quoted Lord Kelvin as saying that “all its properties will be seen to be merely attributes of Motion”; and now we have no less an authority in Biology than Sir Michael Foster saying that we should regard physiological phenomena, not from the old standpoint of properties of Matter, but of kinds of Motion. The idea that the cell

was the ultimate of organic life gave place to the conception of a still simpler form of matter, protoplasm, which, in the words of Huxley, was defined as the physical basis of life. An all-important question here emerges—Granted the unity of organic forms, how are we to explain the wonderful diversity of plant and animal life? An answer to this question came as the outcome of the labours of Wolff, Von Baer, Lamarck, Spencer, Haeckel, and conspicuously Darwin.

Darwin did for Biology what Newton did for Astronomy. Long before Newton, thinkers had speculated about attractive forces in the Universe, but it was reserved for Newton to bring gravitation from the cloud-land of speculation into the clear region of scientific demonstration. In like manner thinkers had groped for a development theory in the organic world—Spencer, though nearer to it than any one of them, just missed it,—but it was reserved for Darwin, by his Natural Selection, scientifically to formulate the cause of biological evolution. Spencer paved the way for the reception of the new view by his masterly attempt to trace the evolution of organic life from what may be called the proto-



plasmic nebulæ to the structural and functional complexities of the highest forms of life. Under the influence of Evolution, Biology took a new lease of life. In the old days the body was viewed as a machine, and scientific study was dominated by that conception. Evolution, by postulating the fact of growth, by substituting the dynamical for the mechanical conception, put the problems of Biology in a new light, and paved the way for the remarkable discoveries of the past thirty years. Credit is also due to another master in this department of science. Of late Haeckel has been largely in evidence in connection with the ultimate problems of life. Here his writings are by no means convincing. It was in science, not in philosophy, that Haeckel won his spurs. His works in science, notwithstanding their speculative tendency, count for much in shedding light upon biological problems. One distinct effect of the writings of the great Evolutionists was the breaking down of the barriers between the respective sciences. Nature is no longer studied on the compartment system: Nature is treated as a living whole, whose operations may for convenience be distinguished in

thought, but cannot be separated in fact. Thus it happened that around Biology gathered the results of the labours of master-workers in other departments. Inspired by the theory of Evolution, scientists have gone on from stage to stage till now light is being thrown upon all the marvellous complexities of the human body, from its earliest minute microscopic structures to the astounding and perennial mysteries of the brain.

Into the region of Psychology the evolution theory, under the pioneering influence of Spencer, has been carried. The problem of Psychology, on the subjective side, is to discover and determine the evolutionary process of consciousness—in other words, the law of intelligence. Of the nature of consciousness we know no more than of the nature of matter. In both cases science begins with simple forms of existence, and traces their development. The Evolution theory compels us to think of mind not as a distinct entity, but as co-related in structure and function to a physical system. In that case mental processes can only adequately be studied through their physical equivalents. Up till Spencer began to write, the mind was almost exclusively studied

by the introspective method, and even followers of Hume and Mill, who had given up the old idea of a separate mental substance, never realised the importance of connecting Psychology with Biology, and of studying mental processes in their earlier pre-human manifestations. In this department great work has been done. So great, indeed, has been the progress, that psychologists of materialistic tendencies have imagined that the secrets of the mind will yield to the methods of science. Here, as in Biology, scientists of a materialistic turn of mind have hoped to solve metaphysical problems by experimental methods. In Biology this hope has not been realised, and we now find the more thoughtful school of scientists admitting that upon the nature of life experimental methods throw no light whatever. Psychologists trained in the Evolution doctrines are not quite so modest. Great, indeed, have been the strides of Psychology since the time when James Mill wrote his book, with the object of making the human mind as plain and intelligible as Fleet Street. At the same time, in the midst of our jubilation over progress, let us take care not to undervalue the

work done by the older school of philosophers. Let us avoid the attitude of a writer like M. Ribot, who, in his exultation over the new Psychology, indulges in a war-dance on the prostrate body of metaphysics. Such a war-dance is rather premature.

Considering what has been done in the science of mind during the last two hundred years in Scotland, England, and Germany, nothing but sheer narrow-mindedness can explain the depreciatory tone of certain philosophers in dealing with the labours of past thinkers. Experimental psychology can never take the place of metaphysical thinking. Upon ultimate problems the new school will throw no fresh light. In the flush of young enthusiasm it was thought that the application of science to Psychology would establish the theory of the materialists of the identity of mind and brain. It was hoped that it would be possible to resolve consciousness into a subtle mode of material motion. There has been repeated in Psychology the same experience as in Biology. Spencer, it will be remembered, began his work on Biology with the hope of being able to show that the phenomena of

life could be interpreted from the standpoint of material forces. In the new edition of his 'Principles of Biology,' he was driven to the admission that in living organisms there is a dynamic element which escapes the subtlest analysis of science. So in Psychology devotees of the experimental school are beginning to realise that science, with all the resources of the laboratory, and under the inspiration of German psychologists like Wundt and Fechner, can throw no more light than the old much-depreciated school on the nature of mind and the fundamental fact of consciousness. In regard, however, to the processes of mental evolution, the new Psychology has done good work. One important step was taken when Wundt broke away from the traditional view that in consciousness the entire energy of the mind is represented. Wundt held that it was the function of Psychology to get, so to speak, underneath consciousness, on the ground that "the unconscious is the theatre of the most important mental phenomena." The conscious, he said, is always conditioned upon the unconscious.

The problem for the new school, which Fechner



may be said to have founded, is this—How can we descend into the secret laboratory where thought has its hidden spring? In other words, while the old Psychology dealt solely with consciousness in its full-fledged state, the new Psychology deals with the evolution of consciousness, and with that object calls in the aid of Physiology. A remarkable instance of the value of the new Psychology is seen in the researches of Helmholtz into sound, which, he showed, was not the simple thing it appears to be, but is really complex, and composed of elementary sensations. Apart from that, of late years mind and its workings have received special attention in consequence of the prominence given to telepathy, thought-reading, hypnotism, and cognate topics. In clearing up the confusion which exists on these subjects, and in reducing to order the new knowledge of mental processes, there is a great field before experimental Psychology on the lines of the Evolution theory. Meanwhile, science within the past century has given the death-blow to the old materialistic conception of Nature, and has brought the modern mind

back to the attitude of the Hebrew poets and prophets—the attitude of awe-struck wonder in presence of a Universe which, with man's increasing knowledge, increases in grandeur, majesty, and mystery.

## CHAPTER VI.

## THE UTILITARIAN SCHOOL.

THE French Revolution had created such a powerful reaction, especially in this country, that progressive ideas, if they were to prevail, would have to come in a new dress. The old catch-words, "The Rights of Man" and the "Social Contract," had fallen into such discredit that any attempts to revive the Revolution spirit would have to be dissociated from the old methods. In Jeremy Bentham the revolt against the reactionary movement, which set in with the Napoleonic *régime*, found a fitting leader. Fortunately for the work which he had to do, Bentham was weak on the side of philosophy. Had he been a speculative thinker, with a passion for a comprehensive system of thought, he would have raised an opposition which would have arrested for years the progressive move-

ment. Not that Bentham was not a systematic thinker. He, too, had clear and strong views on fundamental questions, but his passion for facts, his intense interest in the practical side of life, led him to approach great questions from a standpoint quite different from that of the Encyclopedists. They were thinkers,—men of letters with no experience of affairs,—and as a consequence they began the work of social reorganisation under the idea that no real good was possible unless, in Revolutionary fashion, it abolished institutions which did not conform to their abstract theories. Bentham, on the other hand, had a positive dislike to abstract theorising about man and society.

Bentham dismissed with contempt the catchwords of the Revolution, "The Rights of Man" and the "Social Contract." He treated with equal contempt the imposing generalities by which the philosophers, politicians, and poets of the Reaction had justified the despotic *régime*. All talk about divine right, whether as applied to the monarch or the mob, Bentham brushed aside with the declaration that the object of all political and social arrangements is to secure

the greatest happiness of the greatest number. The phrase did not originate with Bentham. It is to be found in Hume and Hutcheson, and, if we mistake not, in Helvetius; but with those writers it was used with philosophic vagueness. Bentham seized upon it, and under the name of Utility made the greatest happiness of the greatest number the touchstone and standard of all political, legal, and social institutions. Whatever did not promote the happiness of humanity, though it came hoary with the mists of antiquity, though it was sanctioned by, and hallowed with, religion, met with vigorous denunciation at the hands of Bentham. Inspired by the principle of Utility, Bentham commenced an onslaught on the British Constitution, and as a result he is now known as the greatest law reformer which this or any other country has produced. In law and legislation he strove for two things—humanity and simplicity; and to his efforts are mainly due the elimination of barbarity and chaos from our legal codes. He did this because his utility doctrine had no affinity with the old Revolution watchword, “The Rights of Man.”



Bentham's Utility principle just suited the practical taste of his countrymen: it reconciled conservative thinkers, who would have bitterly resented the revival of the doctrines of Rousseau. But sooner or later the principle of Utility was bound to be subjected to critical analysis. Sociological theories, in the long-run, are found to have a psychological root. Before we can assume that the desire for the happiness of the greatest number is a fundamental desire of humanity and should be the determining factor in legislation, we must explore psychologically the individual mind. Bentham did not see that Utility in its way was as dogmatic as the principle of Right, which he denounced. The immense practical importance of Utility in the hands of Bentham blinded him to the fact that it was after all only a rough-and-ready instrument of progress, and stood in need of philosophic justification and support. Why should the individual man work for the happiness of the greatest number? Is there not a danger that under legislation for the majority the minority will be subjected to a new despotism? We can imagine the advocate of the Rights of Man declaring that happiness should be the result,

not the motive, of legislation; that the result is best secured when men are left in the exercise of their natural right to liberty, and that legislation should only be used to prevent infringements of their natural liberty. Bentham, absorbed in practical work, did not seek to find a psychological root for his sociological principle of Utility. This task was undertaken by his immediate and distinguished follower, James Mill. In a practical way Bentham had applied the doctrine of happiness to other spheres besides the political. He thought he could show that in ethics, in the private as well as the public life of men, everything was reducible to the desire to procure pleasure and to avoid pain.

In a business-like fashion Bentham set himself to classify pleasures and pains with their respective sanctions and deterrents, but the whole affair was mechanical, lacking utterly in unity. It was clear that if Utilitarianism was to make headway among thinkers, it would need to be traced to certain fundamental elements in human nature. This is the task which James Mill set before himself in his 'Analysis of the Human Mind.' The question which James Mill put was this: How do

ideas originate, develop, and combine in the mind? Discarding as he did the Intuition theory, which had considerable vogue as the result of the reaction against the French Revolution, Mill was compelled to discover in experience the key to all mental phenomena. The clue to what he considered the solution of the problem Mill got from Hartley. Hartley's title to fame lies in the fact that he was the first to make an exhaustive attempt to interpret the Experience-philosophy of Locke along the lines of physiology. All the complications of mental phenomena, according to Hartley, are due to the combined actions of simpler sensations and ideas, and are explainable by the law of association of ideas. This on the physiological side in Hartley's theory takes the form of vibrations in the molecules of the brain. This part of the theory was ignored by James Mill, though it has come to the front in greatly modified form in the latest Evolution theory of mental phenomena. In the excellent little book on Hartley in the "English Philosophers" series there is a suggestive reference to the original place which Hartley holds in the history of psychology. Hartley's doctrine of Vibrations, it is pointed out,

appears in a much altered form in G. H. Lewes's "neural tremors" and groupings. Psychology has been treated in Germany from the physiological side by Lotze, Helmholtz, Fechner, and Wundt. In fact, if we go back to Hartley's 'Observations on Man' we discover some of the germs of the latest development of the science of mind.

James Mill treated the question from his own point of view. He sought to apply the method of physical science to mental science. In the physical world the ultimates are atoms, to the combinations of which in great variety the complexities of Nature are due. Mill contended that feelings are the ultimates of the world of mind, and under the influence of the law of association all the higher feelings and ideas of the mind are produced. As the mind, in his view, has no innate powers, all that it possesses must be due to experience, which again is determined by the manner in which associated ideas are presented to the mind. Here, then, we come to see the vast importance of education and institutions in the training of the human race. The Lockian theory rested on the notion that to the individual mind experience

was the only inlet of knowledge. Mill's Association theory extends this to society, whose progress may be greatly accelerated by utilising educational and political agencies for the production of associated ideas of the highest value. In the words of Höffding: "Here, then, we have an unlimited prospect of influencing the intellectual life of man and determining the direction it shall take; for legislation, education, and the ordering of external circumstances in general, determine the connections of ideas by which men are governed." Thus, as Höffding goes on to remark, "the associative psychology not only confers the possibility of 'understanding' men's ideas, but also of 'determining' which ideas and which association of ideas shall prevail in the future." When we consider further that James Mill accepted the Revolution doctrine that men were born with much the same capacities, and that the differences among them were traceable to differences in circumstances and education, we can easily understand his firm faith in education and institutions as the all-important means of re-creating humanity by the creation of a new political, social, and intellectual environment.



This view is confirmed by J. S. Mill, who, writing of his father's work, says: "In Psychology his fundamental doctrine was the formation of all human character by circumstances through the universal principle of Association and the consequent unlimited possibility of improving the moral and intellectual condition of mankind by education." And here we come upon the explanation of the touching faith of the Utilitarians in the power of institutions to mould the human species. Bentham, for instance, had quite a passion for framing constitutions for all the countries of the world. He was as ready to legislate for Hindostan as for his own parish. He had also a plan for reforming criminals, growing naturally out of his idea that human nature under the power of new circumstances was capable of great transformation. His famous Panopticon was a mill for "grinding rogues honest, and idle men industrious."

As the outcome of all this, we have the Utilitarian school of philosophers arriving by a different route at the creed of the Revolution thinkers—namely, the modifiability of human nature and the perfectibility of society. The

difference between the two is this: The Revolution thinkers believed that before their creed could have a chance of success the whole social structure had to be demolished; while the Utilitarians, accepting the social structure as it was, sought to modify it in accordance with their creed. But excellent as was the work of James Mill, Utilitarianism was not yet raised to the dignity of a philosophic system. James Mill had explored the mind with the view of finding a psychological basis for the political and educational theories of Utilitarianism, but he left untouched central problems of philosophy,—those which relate not merely to the processes of thought, but to the nature and validity of thought. James Mill contented himself with investigating mental processes, without troubling himself about the nature of mind and its relation to the material universe. A complete philosophy is impossible till an attempt is made to get behind mental processes to the nature of mind, the scope of its operations, and its relation to the material universe and to its Cause. The task of giving the Utility theory of Bentham and the Psychology of James Mill their proper setting in a coherent and comprehensive

system of philosophy was undertaken by John Stuart Mill, who was looked upon as the philosophic heir of the great prophet of Utilitarianism. From his earliest years young Mill was dedicated by his father to philosophy. In 1812, when the boy was six years old, James Mill, in a reply to an offer by Bentham to be his guardian, remarked : "Should I die, the thought that would pinch me most sorely would be leaving the poor boy's mind unmade." James Mill goes on to say that he "accepts the offer of Bentham so as to leave John a successor of both of us."

## CHAPTER VII.

## THE PHILOSOPHY OF JOHN STUART MILL.

THE two cardinal doctrines of the Utilitarians which inspired them with sustained belief in the cause of progress were, as we saw in the previous chapter, the modifiability of human nature under the psychological law of Association, and the perfectibility of society. The influence which both Bentham and James Mill exercised on the political life of their time entitled their disciples to hope great things from the Utilitarian propaganda. Young Mill caught the contagion. He tells us in his 'Autobiography' of the kind of intellectual mesmerism which Bentham's writings exercised over him. Bentham's principle of Utility, he says, "gave unity to my conception of things. I now had opinions, a creed, a doctrine, a philosophy, a religion, the inculcation and diffusion of which could be made the principal outward purpose of my life, and I had a

grand conception laid before me of changes to be effected in the condition of mankind through that doctrine." Bentham's sociological principle of Utility, when combined with his father's psychological law of Association, gave young Mill what he believed to be the basis of a good working system of Philosophy, fraught with great social and political possibilities. Experience had a moderating view upon Mill. The Utilitarian creed proved no magic wand. At its touch human nature refused to be transformed, and the Benthamite millennium delayed its coming.

Many of the ideas of the Benthamites, who became known as Philosophic Radicals, were translated into reforms, but, in the words of Mill, "these changes had been attended with much less benefit to human wellbeing than I should formerly have anticipated." Mill seems to have come to the conclusion that the reason lay in the fact that Utilitarianism had partially failed, because it had not an adequate philosophic basis, and on this account did not strike at the root of current conceptions, upon which the prevailing ideas and institutions rested.



Thus we find Mill declaring his conviction, after years spent in propagating the doctrines of Bentham and his father, "that no great improvement in the lot of mankind is possible until a great change takes place in the fundamental constitution of their modes of thought." Mill came to the conclusion that the great obstacle to progress in all directions was the popularity of the theory of what is known as Intuitionism, which, as a reaction against the creed of the Revolution School, was being used to prop up old institutions and to give new vitality to old creeds. He says: "The notion that truths external to the mind may be known by intuition or consciousness, independent of observation and experience, is, I am persuaded, in these times, the greatest intellectual support of false doctrines and bad institutions. . . . There never was such an instrument devised for consecrating all deep-seated prejudices." Intuitionism, Mill admitted, even after his father's book on the 'Analysis of the Mind' had been written, still occupied the public stronghold.

Mill recognised the close connection between Philosophy and Politics; and his experience of

public affairs seems to have led him to the belief that the most effective way to serve the cause of progress was to attack the Intuitionist School of Philosophy. Here, it seems to us, we have the secret of Mill's onslaught upon Hamilton. In examining Hamilton's system of thought, Mill was driven to formulate his own system in a comprehensive and detailed form, and in the act of doing so he gave Utilitarianism precisely the philosophic foundation in which it was deficient. Bentham and James Mill rested their sociology and psychology on experience. Mill expanded their experience doctrine in all directions till it became a full-blown system of philosophy. What Mill had to do was to subject the mind to a much more rigorous analysis than had been done by his father. If existing beliefs and institutions fortified themselves by an appeal to certain intuitions in the original structure of the mind, clearly the first thing to be done was to examine the mind. The two fundamental questions are: How do we know, and What do we know? J. S. Mill in his polemic against Intuitionism was driven back to the position of David Hume. According

to Hume, knowledge originates in impressions made upon the senses, and, of course, is bounded and limited by the external world. To the question, How do we know? Hume, supplemented by Hartley and James Mill, would say we know by distinguishing between likeness and unlikeness among phenomena; the guiding principle being, with Hume, custom, and with Hartley and Mill, association. Observe that between the mode of our knowledge and the nature of our knowledge there is a close logical connection. If we know by the distinguishing of relations among phenomena, clearly knowledge, when perfectly organised, will consist of the recognition and classification of facts, and the massing of them into groups.

Mill's logic grows naturally out of his theory of mind. His experiential psychology makes no provision for causation, necessity, and intuitive beliefs. If the mind can only distinguish and classify the various experiences of the external world brought by sensation, manifestly it is not warranted in dogmatising about the nature of what lies outside of the mind. As the present writer has elsewhere said: "Mill, like Comte,

considered that scientific men were going beyond the inductions of experience when they endeavoured to attribute to Nature any kind of inherent regularity and necessity. Hence his remark that in some other planet two and two might make five. With Mill, a scientific philosophy had done its work when it revealed the existence of a number of laws whose inter-relations were undiscoverable, and upon which the regularity of the Cosmos depended. Mill's conception of the world was that of a collection of facts grasped by the mind by virtue of the law of Association—facts existing by no inherent necessity, but resting in the last analysis on the arbitrary and accidental. In our Cosmos these facts exist in one way; elsewhere the connection may be totally different. Thus, as Mr Taine puts it, the experiential philosophy, the philosophy which plumed itself upon refusing to go a step beyond induction, ends in an abyss of chance, an abyss of ignorance."

Mill, in his anxiety to deal a blow at the supernaturalism and intuitionism upon which what he considered the false ideas and the obstructive institutions of his day rested, failed to notice that he

at the same time dealt a blow at science. If we can do nothing but distinguish and classify phenomena, if what we are accustomed to call our belief in the uniformity of nature be simply an expectation of our minds based upon custom or habit, plainly we can predict nothing certain about the future, —not necessity but contingency is the ruling principle of life and philosophy. Over Science as well as Theology is thrown the shadow of uncertainty. Hume realised this fact ; hence the absolute nature of his scepticism. Mill, however, was a devotee of science, and it remains strange how, with his philosophical theory, he contrived to place unflinching faith in the laws of Nature. As Hume could not rest in the supernatural view, and as Science in his day had detected no other, he was driven into a sceptical attitude : with him it was a choice between intelligence and fortuity. Mill heard faint murmurings of the evolutionary conceptions of the Cosmos, but he was by temperament and training unable to assimilate the new views, which had, therefore, no effect upon his philosophy, which in its main features was that of Hume. A like note of uncertainty is detected in his theory of the external world. Just as Mill on the ground of



experience denied to the mind any knowledge of a necessary cause of the Cosmos, so on the same ground he denied another belief of the Intuitionists, namely, that the mind had direct knowledge of the external world. According to Mill, all we know of matter is the sensation which it creates in the mind—hence his famous definition of matter as a permanent possibility of sensation. It is, however, when we come to Mill's definition of mind as a permanent possibility of feeling that we discover the desperate straits into which he is driven by his attempt to explain the fact of consciousness on the lines of experience and association.

Mill likened the law of Association of Ideas in Psychology to the law of Gravitation in Astronomy. Let us see if the one law reduces mental phenomena to unity as the other does cosmical phenomena. Mill remained at the Lockian conception of mind as the passive recipient of sensations. He talks about the association of sensations and ideas. We are told that "sensations and the resultant ideas are associated according to certain laws." What does the work of associating sensations and ideas? Do sensations and ideas by some kind of psychological chemistry enter into combinations

and then emerge in Consciousness as knowledge? The truth is, this form of Empiricism can never explain mind. The one question which Empiricism cannot answer is this—How can Consciousness be at once the product and the interpreter of experience? We cannot understand the law of the Association of ideas except we postulate thought as the presiding element in the process. We talk intelligibly when we say that mind has the power of associating ideas, but we talk unintelligibly when we say that mind is made up of sensations and ideas held together by a certain mysterious something which we call Association. Reduce the self to sensations, and you never reach the idea of individuality, which implies that something permanent remains in the midst of the fleeting sensations. With his usual candour, Mill frankly admits his inability to explain Consciousness on the lines of the Association Psychology. He says: “If, therefore, we speak of the mind as a series of feelings, we are obliged to complete the statement by calling it a series of feelings which is aware of itself as past and future; and we are reduced to the alternative of believing that the mind or ego is something different from any series of feelings or possibilities

of them, or of accepting the paradox that something which *ex hypothesi* is but a series of feelings can be aware of itself as a series."

Had Mill been familiar with German philosophy he would have had the advantage of studying Kant's attempt to solve this great problem. In many ways Kant's system tends to phenomenalism, but in this particular he gets over the difficulty which baffled Mill. With Kant the mind is something else than "a permanent possibility of feeling," a something more imposing than the passive recipient of sensations. By his system of categories Kant made mind not a passive but an active agent in the production of knowledge. Kant's theory has this advantage: It enables us to understand why mind may at once be the product and the interpreter of experience. Mill leaves us in hopeless bewilderment. He candidly admits that he is here in presence of a final inexplicability. His Psychology, like his Cosmology, ends in uncertainty. We never get beyond probability. Our knowledge of the Universe resolves itself into an association of facts, and our knowledge of mind into an association of ideas. Beyond individual experience we cannot go; from individual experience we cannot

logically infer necessity and universality. According to Mill, in nature there are no necessary laws, in the mind no necessary truths; and what is his Utilitarian creed but an admission that in ethics there is no such thing as moral intuitions, the only standard of actions being the pleasurable and the painful? In brief, Mill's whole system of philosophy, by denying the ability of the mind to reach necessary truths, envelops all the aspects of life and thought in an atmosphere of uncertainty.

In his admirable little volume, 'Recent British Philosophy,' Professor Masson goes to the root of the matter as follows: "Mr Mill's logic corresponds with what the science of logic could alone be, consistently with his fundamental psychological principle. It could not be like the old logic and Hamilton's logic, a science of the necessary laws of thought, but only a science of the method of quest after experimental truth or probability. So in his fine essay on Liberty the radical idea is that one can never be surer of anything, be it even the forty-seventh proposition of the first book of Euclid, than in proportion as the chances of contradiction are exhausted; and the high value set thus upon human freedom, and even upon eccentricity of

thought and action, seems to be grounded on the conviction that the human race can never know what it may attain to in the shape either of knowledge or of the power until it has sent out a rush of the largest number of individual energies simultaneously, and with the least restraint from law or custom in all directions. As for the essay on Utilitarianism, it is expressly a restatement of Paley's and Bentham's theory of expediency as the sole possible foundation of morals, but with a suggestion of this higher and more exquisite definition of expediency characteristic of Mr Mill, that it means the largest possible amount of pleasure, and the least possible amount of pain, not to you or me, or all mankind only, but to the sum total of sentient existence. In short, if I am not mistaken, Mr Mill's writings prove that if he thinks of any one particular mode of thought among his contemporaries as being more than any other chargeable with the total mass of obstruction, fallacy, and misery that yet rolls in the heart of society, as being more than any other the False God or Baal or Moloch of the human mind, it is the theory of necessary beliefs."

Mill was essentially the philosopher of a transi-



tion period. With a wider mind, a richer and finer temperament, than Bentham and his father, J. S. Mill was responsive to laws of thought and modes of activity which were alien to his own. His transparent candour, and his freedom from sectarianism, led him to open his mind to ideas with which he could sympathise, but which he could not assimilate and fit into his earlier system of thought. Time has dimmed somewhat the halo which surrounded Mill's reputation, but those who dissent most from his teachings are free to confess that as an intellectual pioneer he stood in the first rank, and in the cause of progress he bore himself nobly. At this time of day it is easy enough to pick holes in Mill's system of thought, but if we wish to do Mill justice we must view his life-work by the intellectual acquirements of his own time, not by the superior knowledge of our day. The question is not how stands Mill as a philosophic thinker when tested by the standard of to-day, but what was his influence on the thought of his own day? In order to answer this question we must know the state of philosophy in England when Mill began to write. In one of his own essays, written in 1835, he thus describes the thought of his time: "Eng-

land once stood at the head of European Philosophy. Where stands she now? Consult the general opinion of Europe. The celebrity of England in the present day rests upon her docks, her canals, her railroads. In intellect she is distinguished only for a kind of sober good sense, free from extravagance, but also void of lofty aspirations. Among few is there any interest in the great problems of man's nature and life; among still fewer is there any curiosity respecting the nature and principles of human society, the history of the philosophy of civilisation, or any belief that from such inquiries a single practical consequence can follow."

When Mill wrote these words he did not forget that philosophic thinking had admirable representatives in Bentham, who was still alive, but he knew that the school which they represented made little headway against the philosophic reaction which followed the French Revolution. What we claim for Mill is that by his sympathetic handling of the ultimate problems of man and society, he raised the tone of English thought, and gave the doctrines of Bentham and James Mill a new setting. His book on Sir William Hamilton's Philosophy awakened Great Britain out of her philosophic

slumbers, and gave a great impetus to the higher thought of the time. The last word on the subject was not said by Mill. After his day the problems of psychology entered upon a new phase under the guidance of Evolution thinkers in this country and in Germany ; but Mill deserves the credit of awakening national interest in problems which, till he wrote, were confined to a few writers of an unpopular type. It was unfortunate for Mill, in regard to his philosophy, that he wrote just before the Evolution conception of Nature and man had begun to make its influence felt. The new ideas were in the air, and with his usual open-mindedness he was ready to give them welcome ; but his work was done. He sowed the seeds of intellectual inquiry ; and when the new conceptions which grew out of Evolution arose, they found congenial homes in the minds of those whose intellectual training had been got from deep study of the works of Mill. Make what deductions we may as regards the incompleteness of his system of thought, the fact remains that John Stuart Mill was one of the great intellectual forces of the nineteenth century,—a writer whose memory thinkers of all shades of opinion delight to honour.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## HAMILTON AND CARLYLE AS PHILOSOPHERS.

As already indicated, the philosophy of John Stuart Mill broke down in the attempt to formulate a complete and coherent system of thought. In his effort to build his philosophy on experience and yet avoid the crudities of materialism, Mill was driven back to the Speculative Nihilism of Hume, in which Reason—which the Revolution thinkers lauded as the one clear, steadfast light for humanity—became a ghostly glimmer in a dense atmosphere of uncertainty. From another quarter came a system of thought which offered better guidance to the intellect, and greater stimulus to the heart of man. Through the writings of Hamilton, Coleridge, and Carlyle, there were imported into this country the philosophic systems of the German school which grew out of the reaction against the

materialism of the French Revolution. Coleridge had little philosophic influence in consequence of his unsystematic and fragmentary style of thinking. Sir William Hamilton, on the other hand, possessed in great degree the philosophic mind. In Hamilton, J. S. Mill recognised a foeman worthy of his steel—a philosopher who had to be reckoned with as a formidable opponent of the Benthamite school. Apart from that, Hamilton deserves special notice on account of the great part he played in the revival of philosophy in Scotland. Till Hamilton entered upon his professorial career, philosophy in the Scottish universities had rather a sickly existence. In his ‘Century of Scottish History,’ Sir Henry Craik admirably describes the aim and method of Scottish philosophy in the pre-Hamilton days: “Its operations ranged over that debatable ground that lay between criticism in its modern sense and proper metaphysical inquiry. In a certain sense, they [Scottish philosophers] were philosophical because they examined and theorised upon the powers of the mind and the motives of human action, and professed to probe into the recesses



of human knowledge. But before the mystic region of metaphysical inquiry they hung an impenetrable curtain, which they painted to look like philosophy, and into that region they refused to penetrate." Out of their intellectual complacency the Scottish university thinkers were roused by David Hume. Kant used to say that Hume had shaken him out of his philosophic slumber. Reid in Scotland was also started by Hume on a career of philosophical activity. Possibly Scottish philosophy would not so easily have been roused but for the fact that Hume's speculations cut at the roots of religion. In any case, Reid recognised that the disaster which Hume had brought upon religion could only be checked by dealing philosophically with the fundamental questions which Hume had raised.

Reid saw that all hope of a rational theory of man and his relation to the world and God was impossible if Hume's theory of mind was accepted. In reply to Locke and Berkeley, Hume said that we have no evidence of the existence of either matter or mind. All we know of matter is only a series of sensations,

and all we know of mind is a series of feelings linked together by custom. In that case, knowledge of truth in the objective sense is impossible, and thus, at one stroke, philosophy, science, and theology were bereft of their foundations. Evidently no progress was possible till Hume's theory of mind was discredited. To this task Reid set himself. It does not fall within our present intention to describe in detail the nature of Reid's polemic. Suffice it to say that Reid has never received the credit which is his due. In some important particulars he anticipated Kant's famous answer to Hume, as the reader may see who cares to study Professor Pringle Pattison's book on 'Scottish Philosophy,' and Professor Fraser's equally suggestive book on Reid.

It was left for Sir William Hamilton, on the lines of Reid's thinking, to explore afresh the problems raised by Hume, and to deal with them in a manner which in Scotland had never before been attempted. Hamilton disposed of Hume's sceptical theory of mind by postulating a fundamental necessary belief or fact — consciousness. Following Reid, Hamilton held that \*—

the mind is not a blank organism, the passive recipient of sense impressions. In the original structure of the mind there exists the capacity, in the very act of perception, to form judgments. Clearly this capacity is not traceable to sense impressions, as without the power of judging sense impressions there can be no knowledge. Consciousness, then, with all that it implies, makes the mind, not a mere flow of feelings linked together with association, but an organism specially equipped by necessary beliefs, by which sense impressions are lifted out of the current of nature, and systematised into a body of coherent knowledge.

What is the fundamental fact to which consciousness testifies? It testifies to the existence of an objective material world. Personal identity and objective existence,—upon those two necessary beliefs, which are presupposed in all intellectual activity, hang all our knowledge of man and his environment. But what is the real nature of this objective existence which we call the world? In attempts to answer this question philosophers have divided into sections. We have materialists, idealists, and natural realists.

Hamilton called himself a natural realist, after the manner of Reid, whose reasonings on this point, however, he purified of their crudeness. It cannot be said that Hamilton's theory of our knowledge of the material world is quite satisfactory. Since his day psychology has made great strides ; but even yet we still await a correct theory of the relation between the mind and its material environment—how far, that is, does the mental structure, as Kant would say, impose its own forms upon sense impressions? One thing can be claimed for Hamilton—he placed psychology upon a new footing, and by his profound handling of the subject gave an impetus to the philosophic activity of John Stuart Mill, and ultimately tinged the evolution philosophy of to-day.

But perhaps the aspect of philosophy with which Hamilton's name is best known is what is called the relativity of knowledge. In his famous 'Edinburgh Review' article he formulated and elaborated his view with a clearness and completeness which made Scotland count for something in the world of philosophy. No doubt much of the popularity of Hamilton in

this regard was due to the manner in which Mansel applied the doctrine of relativity to theology. Mansel argued that our knowledge of ontological matters being purely relative, it is quite inadmissible for man to apply purely human tests to a divine revelation,—the implication being that divine revelations, which seem to us to conflict with morality, are not to be rejected on that account, as our ideas of morality can in no sense be a test of things divine. Mansel's theological agnosticism will ever be remembered by the furious attack made upon it by John Stuart Mill in his book on Hamilton's philosophy.

Hamilton, of course, never meant his doctrine of relativity to be pressed into the service of Agnosticism as it has been by writers like Spencer and Huxley. While admitting the inability of reason to scale the heights of Ontology, he hoped to serve the cause of theism by calling in the needs of the moral nature. It must be admitted that Hamilton at this point has left his philosophical system in a fragmentary condition. His Ontology does not quite harmonise with his Cosmology. Since his day the whole subject has



been handled afresh by thinkers who have come under the influence of the Germans, especially Hegel, and has been lifted into a higher region. In philosophy there is no such thing as finality. The problems which Hamilton pondered still await solution. A thinker's claim to greatness does not always depend on his ability to solve problems, but frequently in the impulse which he gives to intellectual activity. In this direction Hamilton did great and enduring work. By his labours he lifted Scottish philosophy into European fame; and for that, if for nothing else, we may well cherish the memory of Sir William Hamilton.

In Thomas Carlyle the German School had its most influential representative—at least, as regards his power over the large section of the public who remain untouched by purely academic speculations. Carlyle is usually looked upon as a chaotic thinker, a man of wayward poetic temperament, whose thoughts it is impossible to systematise and reduce to speculative unity. It is only on the surface that Carlyle's thoughts lack coherence. The explosive nature of his genius is apt to hide from view the fact that

underlying his dogmatic and oracular deliverances is a comprehensive and consistent system of philosophy. To understand it we must first study the German answer to the fundamental questions which had been raised by the Encyclopedists by their mechanical theory of the Universe and Man. The Germans attacked the theory of the Materialists at the root by contesting their speculative method. In opposition to the Materialists, the Idealists, or, as they were called, the Transcendentalists, held that no solution of the great problems of philosophy is to be had by the process of analysis. In their search for unity the Materialists—and in this they were followed by Mill—thought they had solved the problem when they had resolved the complexity of the Universe and human nature into their primitive elements. In natural phenomena this meant the reduction of everything to matter and motion, as with Holbach; and in mental phenomena the reduction of everything to sensation and ideas, as with Mill. In that case the Universe becomes a mechanical combination of atoms, and human nature a kind of machine moved by two springs—pleasure and

pain. And thus at the touch of the Materialist wand vanish the poetic, the religious, the ideal elements in life, leaving no room for the play of the primitive emotions of awe, wonder, admiration, and worship.

Carlyle, who in his early years drank deeply of the German spirit, approached Nature and Man from a totally different standpoint. He recognised that if we are to approach the Universe scientifically, we must do so from the standpoint of chemistry rather than of mechanics. Mechanical combinations are made up of units which never change their forms. That is to say, the qualities of the mass are simply the combined qualities of the units of which it is composed. For instance, a house is built of stones which have the same qualities in combination as in isolation. Viewing the Universe from the standpoint of mechanics, we can readily understand the Materialists in their attempt to reduce the complexities of Nature to a combination of mechanical atoms. Look at the Universe from the standpoint of chemistry, and we reach a different result. The combination of two chemical substances results in the formation of

a product which is totally different from the isolated substances. Thus water results from the union of substances which have nothing in common with water. So, too, with mental phenomena. Just as the marvellous life of Nature cannot be explained by the mechanical combination of atoms, so the complexities of the mind cannot be explained by the analytic process of reducing them to simple sensations. Pleasure and pain are the fundamental elements of mind, but they are no more to be identified with the highest ethical products than the rose-bush and its fragrance with the soil at its root. By means of a subtle mental chemistry pleasures in the act of combination are transformed into ever higher spiritual qualities, and as ideals lead humanity in pursuit of virtue for its own sake, apart altogether from considerations of happiness and utility. From this point of view it is clear that we must come to the task of interpreting life from another direction than that of Materialism. If we desire to study the essence of the Universe, we must study it, not in its lowest, but its highest manifestations. Just as we never will understand an oak by

studying an acorn, nor a man by studying a child, so we will get no light upon the Universe, as a whole, by studying atoms, or upon the mind by studying sensations.

— The key to the system of Carlyle is to be found in the fact that he interprets the Universe not from its elementary and mechanical side, but from its most highly-finished product—Man. Man, again, he studies not from his elementary sensations, but from his most highly-developed mental and moral attributes. Carlyle reverses the method of the Materialists. They held that man is an automatic machine; Carlyle declares him to be a spirit. If the highest product of the Universe is spiritual, surely, adds Carlyle, the essence of the Universe is spiritual. “Atheistic science babbles poorly of it [the Universe] with scientific nomenclature, experiments, and what not, as if it were a poor dead thing, to be bottled up in Leyden jars and sold over counters; but the natural sense of man, in all times, if he will honestly apply his sense, proclaims it to be a living thing—ah, an unspeakable god-like thing, towards which the best attitude for us, after never so much science, is



awe, devout prostration, and humility of soul, worship, if not in words, then in silence."

What is man? According to Materialism man is a cleverly constructed machine for grinding out pleasure at the dictate of self-interest—a machine, however, with a weak spring, capable of disastrous derangement. With Carlyle man is essentially a spirit. "To the eye of vulgar logic," says he, "what is man? An omnivorous biped that wears breeches. To the eye of pure reason what is he? A soul, a spirit, and divine."

Is there any relation between Nature and man?

We have seen Mill's answer. According to him, we are sure of nothing outside of the mind.

We are conscious only of our own ideas; we have no conscious relation to any spiritual principle. Mill can discover no unity at the heart of things. According to Carlyle, Nature and man are manifestations of Spirit, in which they live, move, and have their being, and find their unity. This unity can never be discovered by the logical methods of the metaphysicians, or the dissecting methods of the materialistic man of science. The unity of things, what Goethe calls the "open secret," is revealed only to those

who approach Nature with the humility of the poet and religious worshipper. In dealing with science we pointed out that the deepest thinkers in their study of the material world had come to recognise three unities—unity of substance, unity of force, and unity of process. Reduced to their ultimate analysis, these resolve themselves into one unity, Force, which, as Spencer admits, can be more rationally conceived as spiritual than as material. Science agrees with Carlyle that the Universe is divine.

It was one of Carlyle's weaknesses that he could not sympathise with the scientific attitude. A thinker of poetic temperament, he disliked analysis and everything that savoured of the dissecting-room. He forgot that analysis, verification, and scientific method generally are necessary if the mind is not to mistake the illusions of the imagination for the facts of Nature. To what absurdities Idealism can descend was illustrated by the Nature-Philosophy of Germany, in which the attempt was made by purely *a priori* and speculative methods to construct a scientific theory of the Universe. Little as Carlyle knew it, science was his ally. When he

speaks of the Universe as in very truth the star-domed city of God, and reminds us that through every crystal and through every grass-blade, but most through every living soul, the glory of a present God still beams, he is simply saying in the language of poetry what Spencer says in the language of Science, that the world of phenomena is sustained and energised by an Infinite, Eternal Power.

Not only does Science agree with Carlyle's conception of Nature, but it agrees also with his conception of the relation between Nature and mind. Science does not countenance the theory of Mill that mind and matter have nothing in common, and that we cannot infer from the operations of mind the existence of a material world. Mill's theory ends in Dualism; Carlyle's theory, which Science confirms, in Monism. Nature and mind are not two distinct substances standing ever against each other in complete opposition; they are manifestations or symbols of the Eternal Power. Mind, being the highest form of spiritual evolution, possesses powers which are not opposed to Nature, but which are simply the powers of Nature in a higher scale of

development. Nature as the manifestation of divine consciousness becomes interpretable by the human consciousness. We have seen in dealing with Mill that the law of Association of Ideas gives no clue to the relation between the mind and the material universe. On the Carlylean theory the relation becomes intelligible. The fact that we can understand Nature at all, and form intellectual conceptions of objective existence, points to an intimate correspondence between the outer and inner worlds. How is this correspondence to be explained? In the words of Professor Pfeiderer, "the two have their common ground in a Divine thinking, in a creative Reason which manifests itself partly in the order of the real world, and partly in the thinking of our understanding as it copies that order." In a word, science is simply an attempt to reproduce the creative thoughts of the Infinite mind,—a process which would be impossible but for the fact that between the Divine and the human consciousness there is essential relationship.

Notice how Carlyle's philosophy shapes his entire outlook on human affairs. Start, like the Em-

piricists, with the assumption that we can know nothing beyond fleeting phenomena, and that there is no such thing as moral intuition, and naturally religion becomes a form of superstition; morality resolves itself into utility, and pleasure and pain take the places of right and wrong. Life becomes impoverished until, in the words of James Mill, "it is a poor thing at the best." Start with Carlyle on the assumption that Nature and man are manifestations of the Divine, and worship becomes the highest act of the human spirit. Where the Empiricists treat Life as a kind of conscious oasis in the vast wilderness of the Unknowable, Carlyle views it as a temple in which the soul prostrates itself in awe-stricken adoration before the Eternal. Carlyle's soul finds no satisfaction in the contemplation of man and his utilitarian aims; he yearns for a permanent resting-place in the midst of the transitory. Like the Psalmist, and in the mood of his Calvinistic forefathers, Carlyle cannot rest secure amid the shifting sands of phenomenal life; he desires to feel himself enveloped by the Eternal presence. Out of Carlyle's conception of the Universe and man grew naturally his conception of the duty of man. If man's highest religious



duty is worship of the Eternal, his highest ethical duty is recognition of his dependence on and obedience to the Eternal, whose laws are written in Nature, in the heart of man, and in the panorama of history as shaped and moulded by great men. The hero, as the symbol and incarnation of the Divine, becomes an object of admiration, and under the influence of high emotions, not cold, calculating self-interest, humanity goes forward on the road to the Ideal.

Carlyle's influence in the nineteenth century was widespread, owing to the fact that he used literature rather than philosophy as the vehicle of his views. In Scotland, in particular, his influence was specially marked. Carlyle, under the spell of thinkers like Goethe and Schiller, brought into literature a new spirit. When Carlyle began to write, Scottish literature was under the domination of the Whigs, whose standards were thoroughly conventional. On the great question of human destiny they preserved a reticence which perhaps was imposed upon them by the despotism of the Church, but which was none the less fatal to originality of thought and expression. At the shrine of a respectable secularity the Whig writers wor-

shipped ; the mystical, the transcendental, were resolutely ignored. Carlyle, though a contributor to the 'Edinburgh Review' and a friend of Jeffrey, had not the temperament of a Whig. He was a Calvinist born out of due season. He had parted with the old creed, but there remained with him the contemplative spirit, the deep meditative solemnity, the sense of awe in presence of the Infinite—feelings which enabled the Calvinists, in spite of their narrowness, to play a noble part in the history of Scotland. Differing widely from the Evangelicals, whose creed had become mechanically stereotyped, Carlyle was at one with them in their protest against the Moderates, who were at ease in Zion. Under the spell of Reason, as represented by Deism, the Moderates and the Whigs had robbed human life of its mystery, and reduced the higher aspirations of the soul to the level of a kind of drawing-room utilitarianism. Carlyle tore aside the veil of prosaic secularity which the Moderates, the Whigs, and the Utilitarians had woven round the nature of man, and in poetic flashes revealed man to himself as a being whose little life was surrounded by infinite terrors and splendours.

Carlyle struck a new note in literature, the

note of the supernatural in the natural. With the religious public the supernatural was the opposite of the natural. With the Rationalists, Whigs, and Philosophic Radicals alike, there was no supernatural, only the natural. They contented themselves with analyses of man and nature, and these analyses were accepted as explanations about which there was no mystery. At the touch of this kind of philosophy, wonder and worship took flight. Carlyle restored wonder and worship to science and to literature, by insisting on the fact that the supernatural exists in and through the natural. Carlyle saved the higher thought of Scotland from parochialism by infusing into it the cosmopolitan spirit as represented by the freer and more expansive thought of Germany. He not only imported into this country the German spirit, but by the freshness of his thinking and his fervid ethical insight he revolutionised historical writing, raised immensely our literary standards, and, particularly in his 'Past and Present,' struck the note of social reform, which is the dominant note of our own time. Carlyle's genius was many-sided. He touched and ennobled the national life at all points. He lifted a whole generation of young

men out of the stagnating atmosphere of materialism and dead orthodoxy into the region of the ideal. With the Master of Balliol, we believe that "no English writer has done more to elevate and purify our ideas of life and to make us conscious that the things of the spirit are real, and that in the last resort there is no other reality."

## CHAPTER IX.

## SPENCER AND THE EVOLUTION PHILOSOPHY.

WITH the arrival of Herbert Spencer upon the scene the conflict between the two schools of Philosophy—the Intuitionists and the Experimentalists—assumed a new phase. It must be admitted that Intuitionism, as left by Hamilton, the last great pre-evolution representative of the school, rested on an insecure foundation. To Psychology Hamilton made original contributions, but his attempt to combine in his general system elements belonging to Reid and Kant gave point to the searching criticism of Mill. Mill, however, was more successful in demonstrating the gaps in the Hamiltonian system than in placing his own on an unassailable basis. Mill's interpretation of experience on the lines of Hume ended, as we saw, in a system of philosophic Nihilism. Mill's failure to reach a



satisfying theory of things arose from the adoption of the view popular in his day that nothing should be accepted as truth which cannot be explained by the law of Association of Ideas. We saw the perplexities into which Mill fell when he used this law to interpret belief in personal identity and an external world. Spencer, like Mill, was an Experientialist; but, unlike Mill, he rested his philosophy upon two beliefs, which could not be explained by the Association philosophy, — beliefs, moreover, which, though beyond experience, must be held before experience is even possible.

Where Mill endeavoured to trace personal identity to Association of Ideas, Spencer frankly based it upon psychological necessity. Induction, in which Mill places unreserved faith, according to Spencer has only limited value in philosophy. Induction in science has achieved wonders, but in dealing with ultimate problems like consciousness of self and belief in an external world it fails. Spencer accepts, as ultimate deliverances of consciousness, personal identity and belief in an existence outside of the mind. Thus at one stroke he cuts away the entangling and confused

threads of phenomenalism, which Mill and Comte had woven into the very fibre of the Experience philosophy. We have seen how Mill, by the very nature of his philosophy, was unable to reach the idea of the unity of the Cosmos. By making knowledge consist of the tracing of likenesses and unlikenesses in the Cosmos, Mill could get no farther on the lines of Induction than the following, which represents his final word on the subject: "There exists in Nature a number of permanent causes which have subsisted ever since the human race has been in existence, and for an indefinite, and probably an enormous, length of time previous. The sun, the earth, and the planets, with their various constituents,—air, water, and the distinguishable substances, whether simple or compound, of which Nature is made up,—are such permanent causes. Why these particular natural agents existed originally, and no others, or why they are arranged in such a manner throughout space, is a question we cannot answer: more than this, we can discover nothing regular in the distribution itself,—we can reduce it to no uniformity, to no law." In the hands of Mill, philosophy in its attempt to

reach the unity of things was reduced to helplessness, and here we find the explanation of his growing appreciation of Comte, who boldly declared the problem to be insoluble.

Spencer, with true philosophic instinct, could not rest in a system of thought whose last word was not Cosmos but Chaos. He refused to believe that at the end of all study of phenomena we are in presence of the arbitrary and the accidental. In his view the laws which science discovers in phenomena must be related, and when traced backward must merge into one another as the branches of a tree merge into the trunk, and the trunk into the root. So long as we hold by the mechanical idea of the universe—and this was the view held by pre-evolution thinkers of the Experience school—we do not really reach the idea of unity. Spencer substituted the dynamical for the mechanical view, thereby changing entirely the aspect of the problem. If we hold by the mechanical idea, if we treat the universe as a vast machine, we do not readily seize the idea of unity, because between the various parts of a machine there may be no necessary unity. The unity may exist in the

mind of the constructor of the machine. If, on the other hand, we view the universe, not as a manufactured product, but as an organic process, we begin to look for unity in the process.

In framing his philosophy, Spencer was put upon the right track by the two great scientific generalisations, the Nebular theory and the Conservation of Force. By aid of these Spencer reached the view that the Universe as we see it is in its ultimate analysis reducible to the redistribution of matter and motion. With this as the starting-point, Spencer proceeds to trace the process in harmony with dynamic and chemical laws, by which the Universe evolves from its earliest nebulous to its latest marvellously complex form. It is one of Spencer's greatest titles to fame in this department that he did not follow the scientific thought of his time in treating matter as an ultimate, as he might well have done, considering that when he wrote, and indeed until recently, the Atom was treated as the foundation brick, so to speak, of the material world. In a chapter in his 'First Principles' of great analytic power, Spencer showed that matter, when philosophically handled, resolved itself into

Force, or, as it is now more accurately termed, Energy. One of the most remarkable features of modern science has been the application of the Spencerian formula to the Atom. The new views associated with Radium, and what is known as the electric theory of matter, point to the identification of matter with Energy, thus confirming the Spencerian conception of the Universe as the manifestation of an Infinite and Eternal Energy. And here, in quite an unexpected manner, we find the philosophical view of Spencer coinciding with Goethe's poetic personification of the Infinite Energy:—

“ In Being's floods, in Action's storm  
I walk and work, above, beneath,  
Work and weave in endless motion.

Birth and Death,  
An infinite ocean ;  
A seizing and giving ;  
The fire of living :

'Tis thus at the roaring loom of Time I ply,  
And weave for God the Garment thou seest Him by.”

It would take us too far afield to accompany Spencer in his task of tracing the process of evolution from star to soul, from the nebulous condition of the Universe to its highest stage of development. For purposes of philosophy it is necessary, however,



to ask this all-important question: How is mind related to the universal Energy? At this point there is some little confusion in the Spencerian philosophy. As a recoil from the theological conceptions of his time, Spencer was driven to over-value the mechanical interpretation of the evolution process. In the early editions of his 'Principles of Biology' he was disposed to think that the mechanical methods which he applied to inorganic evolution would also serve for interpreting organic processes. He seemed to think that between matter, life, and mind there is co-relation and equivalence. Forces which we call living in his earlier view were simply transformed solar energies. In his later edition of his 'Principles of Biology' he came to the conclusion that "life in essence cannot be conceived in physico-chemical terms." The same difficulty met him in dealing with that highly specialised form of life which we call mind. Anxious as Spencer is to unify matter and mind, he is driven to the admission that "what we know as Consciousness cannot be identified with waves of molecular motion propagated through nerves and nerve centres: a unit of feeling has nothing in common with a unit of motion."

At first it would seem as if Spencer's attempt to pierce to the unity of things had broken down. He seems to reach a dualistic rather than a monistic conception of things: he appears to leave us with two ultimates, matter and mind, which in thought cannot be united. If we turn, however, to his 'Principles of Sociology,' we find Spencer, in dealing with primitive religion, saying that "the final outcome of that speculation commenced by the primitive man is that the Power manifested throughout the Universe, distinguished as material, is the same Power which in ourselves wells up under the form of consciousness." In other words, the energy which we are conscious of as mind is a specialised form of the Infinite Energy. In the words of Scripture: "In Him we live, move, and have our being." Unfortunately Spencer identified his Philosophy with the Hamiltonian theory of the impossibility of knowing anything of the Absolute—a theory which in its superficial aspect was made the basis of a once-popular form of scientific Agnosticism.

In reality, the Spencerian philosophy is quite in harmony with the highest form of Theism. In the words of Fiske, one of Spencer's ablest interpreters:

“The God of the scientific Philosopher is still, and must ever be, the God of the Christian, though freed from the illegitimate formulas by the aid of which theology has sought to render Deity comprehensible. What is this wonderful dynamic which manifests itself to our consciousness in harmonic activity throughout the length and breadth and depth of the Universe, which guides the stars for countless ages in the paths that never err, and which animates the molecules of the dew-drop that gleams for a brief hour on the shaven lawn—whose workings are so resistless that we have nought to do but reverently obey them; yet so infallible that we can place our unshaken trust in them, yesterday, to-day, and for ever? . . . Here science must ever reverently pause, acknowledging the presence of the mystery of mysteries. Here religion must ever hold sway, reminding us that from birth until death we are dependent on a Power to whose eternal decrees we must submit, to whose dispensations we must resign ourselves, and upon whose constancy we may implicitly rely.” Just as we find Spencer grounding the unity of the Cosmos and man in an Infinite and Eternal Energy, in the contemplation of which religion

consists, so we find him grounding morality, not on the combination of happiness and utility, as with Bentham and Mill, but in obedience to the will of the Eternal, as expressed in the laws of the Cosmos. Spencer revolutionised Utilitarianism when he showed that views of right and wrong which the Utilitarians traced to individual experiences of pleasure and pain were really the products of evolution, the outcome of racial experiences, which by their consistency and universality had become organic intuitions in the individual mind. Here, as in his interpretation of the Universe, Spencer, in his antagonism to the current religion, gave his moral philosophy an anti-theological bias. But when carefully studied, Spencer's view of the evolutions and sanctions of morality are quite in harmony with Theism. As has been well said: "When you say of a moral belief or a moral sentiment that it is a product of evolution, you imply that it is a something which the Universe, through untold ages, has been labouring to bring forth. . . . When we see that in our ultimate analysis that is right which tends to enhanced fulness of life, and that is wrong which detracts from fulness of life, we then see that the distinc-

tion between right and wrong is rooted in the deepest foundations of the Universe. . . . Human responsibility is made more strict and solemn than ever when the Eternal Power that lives in every event of the Universe is thus seen to be in the deepest possible sense the author of the moral law that should guide our lives, and in obedience to which lies our only guarantee of the happiness which is incorruptible."

Spencer's evolution theory successfully explains, from the standpoint of science, the manner in which ideas and emotions, once thought to be innate in the individual, developed from racial experience; but from the standpoint of philosophy the problem was left unsolved. In the last analysis, as Professor Höffding remarks, "It must be true of the race as of the individual that the outer always presupposes the inner, that what is acquired is conditioned by what is originally innate." As Höffding put it: "The unassailable standpoint of Idealism is given in the necessity of thought which lies at the bottom of every realistic hypothesis. However far it may be possible to explain man through the world, the world in its turn must always be explained through man,



for we can go no further back than that which is to man a necessity of thought." To Spencer must be given the credit of placing Psychology as well as Cosmology on an entirely new basis.

As a thinker Spencer's originality is unquestioned. By the extraordinary combination in his mind of the philosophic and scientific elements, Spencer occupied quite a unique place in the history of nineteenth-century thought. He possessed in the highest degree two qualities rarely found together—great speculative sweep and great analytic power. Spencer belonged to the highly endowed race of thinkers who have lifted human thought to a higher point of view. By his far-reaching conception of theory and elevated estimate of fact he took from British philosophy the reproach levelled at it by Hegel in one of his scornful moments. Herbert Spencer lifted Science out of the narrow and depressing regions of material utility and placed it on the throne beside divine philosophy.

## CHAPTER X.

## THE GERMAN PHILOSOPHIC MOVEMENT.

It has been shown that the reaction against the materialism of the Revolution school and their successors drew its inspiration from Germany. In their polemic against the mechanical and Utilitarian theories of life, Hamilton, Coleridge, and Carlyle, and it may be added Emerson and the American Idealists, drew largely from the writings of Kant, Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel. The great influence of the German philosophical movement renders treatment of it absolutely necessary if we would gain intelligent insight into the intellectual development of the nineteenth century.

With Kant there began a mode of thinking which was to give a crushing blow to the crude materialism of the Revolution and the subtler forms of thought which, under the name of

Speculative Nihilism and Agnosticism, haunted, until quite recently, the philosophic world. In order to understand the influence of Kant, it is necessary to go back to the epoch-making work of Hume and his predecessors, Locke and Berkeley. By his essay on the 'Human Understanding' Locke started philosophy on a new track. His desire was to get rid of the doctrine of innate ideas by showing that all knowledge was reducible to two factors, Sensation and Reflection. In 'Books to Read and How to Read them' the present writer has dealt at length with this subject, and may be pardoned for reproducing the following, which is appropriate to the present topic:—

“The fundamental question which Locke had to face was this: If our knowledge of the external world comes to the mind through the senses, and is worked up into ideas by reflection, what is the relation between the objective world of Realities and the subjective world of Ideas? To put it briefly—Can we know things as they are? On the innate theory things are knowable as they are; the clearness, distinctness, and intuitiveness of the ideas guarantee their

trustworthiness. We know things through the medium of ideas, says Descartes, and whatever we find in the ideas must necessarily be true of the things. Locke held that our knowledge of the external world was not reached by intuition. The mind, said Locke, does not know things immediately. 'We must not think that our ideas are exactly the images and qualities of something inherent in the object.' What, then, is the exact nature, say, of our knowledge of matter? Locke saw that all the properties of matter could not exist exactly as they seemed to exist, because many of them are conditioned by the mind itself. Light and heat, he saw, do not exist as properties apart from the mind. They exist only in relation to the mind. But if matter is clothed by the mind with secondary qualities, what guarantee is there that the primary qualities which Locke says we do know are not also conditioned by the mind? By excluding the primary qualities of matter from the conditioning activity of the mind, Locke landed his experience philosophy in a difficulty, from which Berkeley endeavoured to extricate it by the bold stroke of abolishing the Lockian idea of matter altogether. According to Berkeley,

spirit, not matter, is the real substance of the Universe.

“David Hume next came upon the scene, and in reply to Berkeley said that if there is no evidence of a permanent substance matter, there is just as little evidence of a permanent substance mind. If what we are conscious of as matter is only a series of sensations in the mind, then we must conclude that all we can know of mind is not a permanent substance, but simply a series of feelings linked together by association. In the hands of Hume the philosophy of Locke and Berkeley ended in utter scepticism. Locke’s theory, like Berkeley’s, was formulated in the interests of theology. Locke hoped to find in Causation a stepping-stone to a great First Cause; Hume, by substituting Association for Causation, knocked the props from theology. By resolving mind as an entity into a series of feelings linked by association, Hume also knocked the props from psychology. Hume drove theology and philosophy into bankruptcy—that is what constitutes him an epoch-making force in the history of thought.”

Grant with Locke that the mind is the passive



recipient of impressions, and not only is it impossible to refute Hume, but it is equally impossible to reach an intelligible conception of consciousness. It is only a step from Locke's theory to that of the Materialists of the French Revolution that mind with its consciousness is a product of matter. Before Hume could be disposed of it was necessary to ask how consciousness could be at once the product and the organiser and interpreter of experience. Kant went to the root of the matter when he asked the simple question—"How is knowledge possible?" Manifestly knowledge is not possible in a mind with no inherent power of its own, and which merely receives passively the flow of impressions from the external world. Consciousness implies the power of the mind to classify impressions, to study their nature, and by a process of discrimination and comparison to reach the universal laws which underlie the isolated particulars of sense-perception. Knowledge, said Kant, is rendered possible because in the structure of mind as such are embedded certain universal forms of thought, regulative principles, so to speak, by which our sense-impressions are transformed into ideas. In the words of Professor Pringle-

Pattison in his suggestive work, 'The Development from Kant to Hegel': "Kant succeeded in showing that out of mere impressions no knowledge could arise, and established as the chief factor in knowledge an active synthesis undertaken by thought. The conceptions by which we express the connection and system of things (*e.g.*, number, substance, cause, &c.) are the different ways in which the central unity of the Ego arranges and binds up the formless manifold of its impressions. These conceptions or categories it is which constitute the permanent in the universe; and in transferring them to the subjective side of the account, Kant vindicated for mind the chief function in the creation of the known world."

In establishing the supremacy of thought-forms as against sense-impressions Kant was victorious as against Hume, but Kant marred the completeness of his triumph by his admission that the thought-forms which the mind impressed upon sense-impressions gave no guarantee that the knowledge so acquired was in correspondence with reality, with things as they are. Kant ends with Hume in phenomenalism. Knowledge, after all, was relative; and though Kant tried hard to save

the situation by endeavouring to find a basis of certainty in the ethical nature of man, philosophically his system, by its doctrine of what is called the Relativity of Knowledge, paved the way for the Nihilism of Hume in a new form. Hamilton seized hold of the doctrine of Relativity, and by his manner of treatment unwittingly played into the hands of Agnosticism.

In Germany the part of Kant's philosophy which emphasised the supremacy of the thought-forms was caught up by Fichte, Schelling, and notably Hegel, and made the basis of a thorough-going system of Idealism. Fichte concentrated his attention upon the Ego. Accepting the fundamental thought of Kant, that of the necessary reference of all existence to self-consciousness, Fichte, by virtue of his strong ethical bent, took a one-sided view of the function of philosophy, which in his hands became identified more with practical life than with a comprehensive theory of things. This is seen in his very defective treatment of Nature. As the Master of Balliol puts it: "In the attempt to reduce Nature to a nonentity—a self-created object of thought—and to make spirit all in all, he turned

the life of spirit itself into something shadowy and spectral, a conflict with a ghost that could not be laid." It was the great merit of Schelling that he made a vigorous attempt to bring Nature within the sweep of Idealism. If, argued Schelling, everything exists for a self-conscious Intelligence, surely we must find intelligence in Nature, or how else can it be interpreted by the mind.

The aim of philosophy in regard to Nature must consist in the attempt to follow the process of intelligence as manifested in the world of things. This phase of thought is represented by the famous Nature-Philosophy of Schelling, in which he exhibits Nature as a great process of intelligence gradually moving on from lower to higher stages till it culminates in the self-consciousness of man. Nature, according to Schelling, is visible intelligence, and intelligence invisible Nature. Too much has been made of the fantastic interpretation of Nature which is associated with Schelling's philosophy. The function of philosophy is not to take the place of science, and to imagine that on the basis of abstract intelligence the marvellous complexity of Nature can be understood. The function of

philosophy is to stand calmly by until science brings home her discoveries in the field of externality, and then to subject the result to the highest interpretation which is possible to the ultimate categories of thought. The Nature-Philosophy overstepped its proper limits—hence the discredit into which it fell. All the same, Schelling's root thought was substantially correct, and is bearing fruit in these days when science is so rapidly being moulded by philosophic conceptions.

Schelling's system, in so far as it united man and the world as parts of a great scheme of Intelligence, broke down in dealing with the Absolute, or, in familiar phrase, God. This result followed from his standpoint—namely, that philosophy had done its work when it reduced the many to the One; or when, in other words, all differences were reduced to Identity. With Schelling the Absolute was neither object nor subject, but the indifference point. Man and Nature were equal manifestations of the Absolute, which, after the method of Spinoza, was viewed as a formless Substance, of which nothing can be predicated. Thus, as in the case of



Kant, we are as far off as ever from finding the connecting link between God and the scheme of things.

The difference between Kant and Schelling is that while the one brought back belief in a supermundane sphere by means of the ethical demands of human nature, the other brought the mind into contact with the Absolute by a process of intuition,—a kind of intellectual ecstasy which had more in common with mysticism than with philosophy.

Dissatisfied with the dualism of Kant's system, and repelled by the mysticism of Schelling's, Hegel set himself to give completeness, coherence, and compactness to Idealism. He seems to have said to himself—If the world is intelligible only to a self-consciousness, if reality is constituted by thought, manifestly an exhaustive analysis of consciousness will give a clue to the problem of Existence. Hegel saw that Schelling had been led astray by concluding that the ultimate fact, the Absolute, must necessarily be Unity in the sense of Identity without differences. What does an examination of self-consciousness, which is the highest form of life

known to us, reveal? Does it not reveal the fact that the unifying principle, the Ego, is not an Identity which excludes differences, but an Identity which maintains itself through differences? Self-consciousness is not a self-contained unit, but a unit which for its very existence needs to go forth and manifest itself in bringing within its sweep the manifold differences of the external world. We cannot think of an Ego separated from a non-Ego. Mind and Matter, Ego and non-Ego, are not, as empirical philosophers imagine, distinct and alien entities; they are co-related existences: the one apart from the other has no meaning. The ultimate fact of knowledge is neither a pure subject nor a pure object. As has been well said: "We know the *object* only as we bring it back to the unity of the self; we know the *subject* only as we realise it in the object. These two ideas, between which our whole life of thought and action is contained, and from one to the other of which it is continually moving, point back to a third idea which embraces them both, and which in turn constitutes their limit and ultimate condition. For where we have

two terms which are thus at once essentially distinguished and essentially related, which we are obliged to contrast and oppose to each other, seeing that they have neither of them any meaning except as opposite counterparts of each other, and which we are equally obliged to unite seeing that the whole content of each is just its movement towards the other, we are necessarily driven to think of these two terms as the manifestation or realisation of a third term which is higher than either. . . . Hence we cannot understand the real character of our external life, or appreciate the full compass of its movement, unless we recognise as its necessary constituents or guiding ideas not only the ideas of subject and object, but also the idea of God."

So far Hegel agrees with Schelling in viewing mind and Nature not as alien existences but as correlated manifestations of Absolute Reason, whose fullest manifestation is seen in self-consciousness of man. Where Hegel differs from Schelling is in declaring that the Absolute is no mere blank Identity but the one fundamental Unity, which maintains itself in all the differences of existence, the All-embracing, the All-sustaining One, the

life and inspiration of all that is. Instead of saying with Schelling the One and the Many, Hegel would say, the One in the Many. "God," says Hegel, "is not a Spirit beyond the stars. He is Spirit in all spirits." With the idea which he obtained from his study of self-consciousness, that of trinity in unity, which distinguishes thought, Hegel proceeds to apply it in the three great spheres,—Logic, Nature, and Spirit. In the latter, when dealing with religion, Hegel endeavours to find a place in harmony with his philosophy for such orthodox doctrines as the Trinity and the Atonement; and whatever may be thought of his success in this direction one thing is clear, that Hegel brought to the study of religion a profundity of thought which made his work in this sphere positively epoch-making.

As to the grandeur of Hegel's system of philosophy there is but one opinion. In spite of its many defects it remains perhaps the greatest achievement the world has ever seen in the realm of abstract thought. Hegel was not content to allow his philosophy to dwell in the region of the abstract. His famous triple formula he applied to history, art, religion,—indeed to all phases of

human thought and activity ; and apart from his direct success, he scattered along his philosophic path seeds of fructifying thought which have borne fruit a thousandfold. In the hands of his successors in Germany, and notably in Great Britain, the fundamental thoughts of Hegel have been brought to bear on Materialism with a force which changed the current of philosophic thought during the nineteenth century. In England the Hegelians, differing in many particulars, have done good work in the campaign against Materialism ; and in Scotland, since the time when Dr Hutchison Stirling published his 'Secret of Hegel,' the Idealistic movement, in the hands of the two Cairds and a number of younger men, has done much to raise the tone of philosophic thought.

In Germany the speculative method of Hegel, taken in connection with its fruitlessness in the interpretation of nature, fell into discredit with the rise of the genuine scientific spirit. The evolution theory as popularised by Darwin, with its appeal to experience, fascinated the German mind, which had grown weary of the speculative methods of Idealism. Hegelianism further lost caste when



distinguished expounders began to use in the cause of unbelief the famous formula which Hegel used in the interests of orthodoxy. The irony of the situation lay in the fact that a number of his followers, thinkers of influence like Strauss, utilised the famous Idealistic system in the defence of Materialism. Lotze further hastened the decline of Hegelianism when in his philosophy he revived in more scientific form the system of Leibnitz. Still, though Hegelianism as a system does not now exist in its complete form, its influence is traceable in various directions. To it is mainly due the fact that the old method, once so popular among men of science, of interpreting the world and man in terms of matter, is now discredited. To Hegelianism belongs the honour of abolishing the old dualism of matter and mind, and placing upon a foundation which every scientific discovery is making even stronger, the idea that Nature and mind do not stand in fundamental antithesis, but stand in close relation as manifestations of Reason, —stages, so to speak, in a great process of spiritual evolution. We hear little nowadays of nature standing ever against man as an alien Power, an

inscrutable collection of forces which in their mechanical sway have no affinity to mind. Matter, the further it is pursued, is seen to be resolving itself into spirit, and at the heart of the universe science is beginning to discover Unity. In the words of Fichte: "There is but one Life, one animating Power, one Living Reason, which is the only possible independent and self-sustaining existence and life, of which all that seems to us to exist and live is but a modification, definition, variety, and form." With Hegel philosophy ends in religion. He sees everything in God, though from his peculiarly involved language difference of opinion exists in regard to what he means precisely by the phrases which he uses in describing the Ultimate Reality. With Hegel God is not merely the First Cause who has set the world in motion under the delegation of mechanical force, and stands aside watching it pursuing its mechanical career. As has been said of another thinker, we may say pre-eminently of Hegel: "This is his fundamental proposition, the existence of Being or God as the substance, life, or essence of all things. He makes Being an absolute unity outside of which nothing whatever exists. God is All in all. All

things proceed from this centre, and can never depart from their relations to it. All things are manifestations or revelations of God; all help to show forth His nature. God is, and all things are but shadows of Him."

## CHAPTER XI.

## POLITICAL ECONOMY AND SOCIALISM.

IN no sphere of thought was the influence of the French Revolution more marked than in economic science. True, Political Economy as a science dates from Adam Smith, but the ideas which inspired his work were in the air, as may be seen by the references in the 'Wealth of Nations' to the views of the Physiocrats, who in France, by their revolutionary ideas on economics, did much to prepare the public mind for the great upheaval. Diderot and his fellows rebelled against State interference with men's religious beliefs and intellectual activities, and Quesnay and his followers rebelled against State interference with men's industrial activities. The pitiful condition of the French peasantry gave dramatic urgency to the demands of the French economists; and

the Revolution, when it came, drew the world's attention to the idea of economic liberty.

In the reaction which followed the Revolution Political Economy fell into the background. Not till 1818 did it in this country begin to exercise political influence. The Philosophic Radicals saw the importance of enlarging their political programme so as to include Political Economy, which, under the advocacy of men like James Mill and Ricardo, soon held an authoritative place in public affairs. So great was the influence of Ricardo that in his hands Political Economy was believed to have been placed upon an impregnable theoretic basis. A few dissentient voices were heard. Malthus, for instance, believed that the main structure which Ricardo had raised was insecure. So strong was the confidence in the stability of the new Science that in 1848 J. S. Mill undertook the task of producing a work to replace the 'Wealth of Nations,' which in his opinion was "in many parts obsolete and in all imperfect." Mill did produce a work, but the effect was different from what he intended. He introduced into it two antagonistic lines of



thought, the Individualist and the Collectivist,—lines which ultimately terminated in Socialism.

For a considerable time the effects of Mill's new method of approaching economic questions were not visible. The middle classes were supreme, and without the franchise those of the working classes who were most keenly interested in Socialism had no political power. Just when the working classes were looking around in a critical spirit, and when franchise elements were in the air, there sprang up a weighty thinker, Karl Marx, who from the teachings of the old economists constructed a system of economics, by means of which he converted the vague aspirations and equally vague discontent of the working classes into a gospel—the Gospel of Socialism. In the political world, especially since the return of Labour members to Parliament, Socialism is rapidly becoming a power in the nation. It therefore demands from political as well as economic thinkers the most careful examination.

It is well to remember that the political ideals of Socialism are rooted in a definite economic theory. It is a suggestive fact that the Socialists lay claim to Adam Smith and Ricardo, as well

as Mill, as their economic teachers. In his definition of wealth, Adam Smith made an unfortunate slip, which was taken over and popularised by Ricardo, to the effect that the wealth of the nation is the creation of labour. Out of this sprang another error, that labour is the measure of the exchangeable value of commodities. In the hands of Ricardo, the error took the form of the remark that labour is the cause of value, and that the value of a thing is determined by the cost of production. Ricardo was the intellectual father of Karl Marx. Once start with the view that profits can only increase as wages diminish, and there is no stopping short of the conclusion that the increasing prosperity of the capitalists is secured at the expense of the increasing degradation of the workers. The first step taken by Karl Marx was to make clear to the working classes the nature and extent of the subtle system of slavery under which he believed they lived. Ricardo, by his definitions, had no intention of stirring up discontent among the workers. In his view, their subjection was due not to capitalism, but to the nature of things as expressed by economic law, for which capitalists as a class

were in no wise to blame. Marx appealed straight to the revolutionary spirit when, in a series of acute and minute analyses, he demonstrated to his own satisfaction that it was to the nature of capitalism, and not to the nature of things, that the slavery of the workers was due. Ricardo asserted that profits could only be secured at the expense of wages. That means, said Marx, that capitalistic profit is simply the surplus value obtained from unpaid labour.

Marx is never content with general assertions. He is not happy till he can trace the abstract law through a mass of concrete details. Accepting the Ricardian theory that labour is the cause of wealth,—that value, in other words, is the creation of the personal labour of the workman,—Marx proceeds to ask this important question, How is the value of labour itself to be measured? The economists having taught that the rate of wages, or value of labour, is determined by the cost of the production of labouring powers, Marx had no difficulty in reaching the view that the wages, or value, of the labourer must at least be equal to the cost of his own living. For example, if six hours of average

social labour be sufficient to provide the labourer with the necessary means of subsistence, and if this be represented by three shillings, that sum the capitalist gives—and must give—to the labourer if he is to get any work out of him at all. So far the transaction is fair and above-board. But the capitalist makes the discovery that the labourer can produce more than he costs, and compels him to work twelve hours instead of six at the three-shilling rate, thereby appropriating the other three shillings. It is this part of capitalistic profit which Marx describes as the surplus value of unpaid labour. In plain English, according to Marx the capitalist robs the labourer of the price of six hours' work.

Worse remains. Machinery, which was expected to be a boon to labour, has been used, according to Marx, to the further exploitation of labour. Machinery is capital, and it is contended that the effect of industrial improvements is to increase the tyranny of capital. So far as labour is concerned, the general results are said to be—First, to reduce wages; second, to prolong the day of labour; third, to over-

work one-half of the working class; fourth, to throw the rest out of employ; and fifth, to concentrate the whole surplus return in the hands of a few capitalists, who make their gains by exploiting the labourers, and increase them by exploiting one another. In brief, the conclusion which Marx reaches is that under the present system the rich are growing richer and the poor are growing poorer. What is the remedy? Socialism is ready with an answer—abolition of the capitalist system; and to this end political power is to be devoted. In a word, Socialism spells Revolution, bloodless, it is true, but more far-reaching than the great French Revolution. The ironical thing is that the seeds of this huge system should have been sown by writers who in their day were looked upon as solid, staid, orthodox economists. At the same time, the opinions of Ricardo and his brethren would have had little effect had it not been for the unsatisfactory social conditions which prevailed. When we consider the terrible contrasts in our midst of wealth and poverty, the tyranny and heartlessness of individual capitalists, the misery and degradation of our slum population, can it be



wondered at that working men, in their sorrow and bitterness, should seize hold of an economic remedy which, by means of votes, promises to bring in the social and industrial Millennium? Still, sympathy with labour must not be allowed to blind us to the dangers of a system like Socialism, which, if fully adopted, would assuredly bring about a social state which would prove to be the antipodes of the Millennium?

It is obvious from this exposition of Socialism that the whole system on the political side derives its entire force from its fundamental economic definition of value. Labour, according to Marx, is the cause of value, or, as it may be expressed, wealth. Labour alone, in his view, creates value. Or, to put it in other words, the value of goods is measured by the quantity of labour expended upon them. Thus, if it takes six hours' labour to make a pair of shoes, and twelve hours to make a coat, a coat is worth two pairs of shoes: the price of the coat, that is to say, will be twice that of a pair of shoes. No headway can be made in overthrowing Socialism until the Marxian theory of value is disposed of. In fact, political economy as a science has

its root in value. A mistake here is fatal. If a thinker's theory of value is unsound, his entire system of economics will tumble about his ears like a house of cards. It is essential at the outset to subject Marx's theory of value to a rigorous analysis. Is labour, then, the cause of wealth? A man of scientific turn of mind labours twelve hours a-day in the endeavour to discover perpetual motion, while another spends the same amount of time in making chairs and tables. Would the Socialist say that both men by their labours were creators of wealth, and had equal right to the produce of their labours? Suppose we give the one the chairs and tables which he has made as the reward of his labour, what reward is to be given to the other labourer who worked hard to discover perpetual motion? According to the Socialist, wealth is the creation of labour. Where, then, is the wealth created by the perpetual-motionist? By what standard are we to measure the value of his labour? Take an illustration by Bohm-Bawerk, an Austrian economist: "If it is natural that the exchange of products should be regulated by the proportion of labour-time that their attainment

costs, it must also be natural that, for instance, any uncommon species of butterfly, or any rare edible frog, should be worth among a nation of hunters ten times more than a deer, inasmuch as a man might spend ten days in looking for the former, while he captures the deer by one day's labour."

Marx was too clear a thinker not to see how readily his theory of value lent itself to ridicule, so he hastened to add a qualification which he imagined would make it more plausible. He saw that labour might be expended in directions which were futile, as in the case of the attempt to discover perpetual motion. To cover such cases, Marx added the qualification that no object has value if it is not a useful thing. If, he says, it is useless, the labour it embodies is fruitlessly expended, and, consequently, does not create value. Such a qualification destroys the original definition that labour is the cause of value. Marx practically admits this, and narrows his definition to the remark that useful labour is the cause of value. In that case we must have some method of distinguishing between "useful" labour and "useless" labour. Useful

labour must be labour for which there is a demand. Here, then, we reach the conclusion that only that kind of labour can have value for which society has a demand. Hence value is created, not by labour as such, but by the capacity of labour to supply the demands of society. In that case the remuneration which falls to labour will depend, not upon the number of hours which the labourer works, but upon the demand for his work. Value, in a word, is not caused by labour. Value, in the words of Guyot, the French economist, should be defined as "the relation of a utility possessed by one person to the need of another person." So that, as the outcome of rigorous analysis, we come round to the view that whether or not labour shall be adequately remunerated depends, not on the amount of hours spent upon products, but upon the social demand for these products. In that case, wages depend, not on any fancied claim of working men to certain rights guaranteed by State or Trade Union legislation, but solely on the law of supply and demand.

Are the interests of capital and labour essentially antagonistic or essentially harmonious? Socialism

rests upon the assumption that they are essentially antagonistic, and Karl Marx, as we have seen, gives what he believes to be the economic reason of the antagonism. Labour, as the creator of wealth, he asserts, is being robbed by capital. Might, not right, rules the industrial world, and under its sway Socialists see the rich growing richer and the poor growing poorer. Once accept the Socialist definition of wealth as created by labour, and it is easy to see how natural it is for Socialists to believe that its unequal distribution is due to the rapacity of capital. If labour is the producer of wealth, the railing of Socialists at the present system of distribution is readily understood. Moreover, in this they have been encouraged by the writings of political economists. What else but discontent could arise among the working classes when they were told by Ricardo that no matter what they did wages could not rise above subsistence point, as the capitalist must have his profits, which could only come out of wages, and with the same breath assuring them that wealth was the creation of labour? The discontent of the workers was certain to be increased, and to drive them into the political arena, when



they were told by John Stuart Mill that the distribution of wealth, unlike its production, is a matter of social or political arrangement. Once admit, with Ricardo and the Socialists, that labour is the creator of wealth, and there is no stopping short of the conclusion of Mill that the present distribution of wealth is unequal and artificial, and should be subjected to legislative methods. Ricardo declared capital and labour to be in a state of war; Mill admitted that "the distribution of wealth is a matter of human institution solely"; and now we find Socialists giving practical effect to the teachings of those distinguished economists. They believe that the only method of bringing the war between capital and labour to an end is that which brought to a close the feud between the lion and the lamb — by the lamb lying down inside the lion!

↓ In opposition to the Socialist theory, we contend that at the present stage of industrial evolution—the machinery stage—the interests of capital and labour are not antagonistic, but harmonious, and that production and distribution are not two separate processes, but simply two aspects of one process. According to this view, every increase in

the productive power of industry leads naturally—provided there is economic freedom—to an increase in the distribution of wealth in a twofold manner, namely, by higher wages and a cheapening of the necessaries of life. In this view the fund from which come profits and wages is not like a cistern, in which every quantity withdrawn lessens the total amount, but rather like a reservoir, where the amount withdrawn is continually being replaced by the ever-increasing volume of the inflowing rills. Given an increasing national wealth on natural principles, and all unseen the law of distribution will operate to the advantage of labour in an even greater degree than to capital. How is this brought about? The explanation is found in the introduction of machinery, by which man's power over Nature has vastly increased, and the blessings of our improving civilisation more widely diffused. The superiority of machinery over hand labour consists in its power to produce a much larger quantity of wealth than manual labour at a relatively less cost. The force of this is seen in the fact that fortunes in business are now made more by small profits on colossal transactions than by large profits on a small and practically stationary

trade. In a highly involved state, where mechanical appliances are strained to the utmost in order to produce both quality and quantity, the demand is for the highest type of workman. Intelligence becomes an important factor in the race for mechanical superiority; consequently it results that the highest possible economy is to give high wages to good workmen. As the object of high wages is to cheapen the cost of production, it follows that the worker, being also a consumer, benefits in the cheapening of products brought about by his highly-paid labour. Thus the worker benefits in a twofold manner—by higher wages, and by the increased purchasing power of wages. But that is not all. In the words of Gunton, an American economist: “A reduction in price puts the commodities within the reach of another class who were previously unable to consume them, and the market is thereby extended, thus enlarging the income without raising the rate of profit—all of which tends to further increase the demand for labour, and to improve the general wellbeing of the community.” Instead of capital and labour being in utter antagonism, they are really co-workers and co-sharers in the increasing wealth of the nation.

Let the productive power be increased, and all unseen the law of distribution, unless checked by class laws, will work to the advantage of both capital and labour.

So far we have examined the Marxian theory of value from two sides. We have endeavoured to show that it will not bear intellectual examination, and that the exploitation idea which Marx associated with it had no existence outside his own philosophic consciousness. Wealth is not the creation of the working classes, who have not grown poorer and poorer under the grinding tyranny of capital. On the contrary, under the guidance of capital, with organising ability linked to mechanical inventions, labour tends to an increasing share of the national wealth, in the form of higher wages and cheaper commodities. What has experience to say on the point? Some time ago a very able writer, Mr J. A. Hobson, contributed an article to a London newspaper on the condition of labour from an international point of view, compiled from the 'Abstract of Foreign Labour Statistics.' Mr Hobson is known as an independent thinker, who has written several books strongly marked by sympathy to the

working classes. He is thoroughly alive to the chinks in the capitalist armour. Here is an extract from his article : "Taking as our criterion money, wages, and hours of labour, we are able to trace in every nation, and in almost all recorded trades, a distinct advance in the position of the wage-earners during the last twenty years." He goes on to say that in Germany, France, Holland, Belgium, Scandinavia, as well as in the United States and Japan, the rise of wages in skilled trades during the last two decades has been considerable. This tendency to improvement in the wage-earning class confirms the view expressed by Mr Hobson in his book 'Problems of Poverty,' in which, while dwelling on the darker side of industrialism, he frankly disagrees with the Socialist assertion that the rich are getting richer and the poor getting poorer. Mr Hobson says : "Until a few years ago it was customary, not only for platform agitators, but for thoughtful writers on the subject, to assume that 'the rich are getting richer and the poor are getting poorer.' This formula was ripening into a popular creed, when a number of statistical inquiries choked it. Professor Leone Levi, Mr Griffen, and a number of careful investigators



showed a vast improvement in the industrial condition of the working classes during the last half century. It was pointed out that money wages had risen considerably in all kinds of employment ; that prices had generally fallen, so that the rise in real wages was even greater ; that they worked shorter hours, consumed more and better food, lived longer lives, committed fewer crimes, and lastly, saved more money. The general accuracy of these statements is beyond question. The industrial conditions of the working classes, as a whole, shows a great advance during the last half century. Although the evidence upon this point is by no means conclusive, it seems probable that the income of the wage-earning classes as an aggregate is growing even more rapidly than that of the capitalist classes."

Ample testimony in the same direction can be had from statistical sources, but Socialists have an astute way of getting out of the difficulty. They reply that they do not deny that progress is made, but that the capitalist gets the lion's share. Well, but Marx denied that any share could fall to the workers so long as capital had control of machinery. Machinery, in the hands of capital, he

predicted, would extend the hours of labour and depress wages so much that Marx foresaw the time when the manufacturer would get the labour of a whole family for the wages he used to pay to the head alone. In a word, Marx saw going on a process which would lead to the enslavement of the working class. In face of the actual position of the workers, with their higher wages, shorter hours, and cheaper commodities, the gloomy predictions of Marx are positively farcical. Marx was a man of great mental powers, who might have done lasting work in economics had he not been trained in the Hegelian school, in which Nature and Life were interpreted through speculative principles. Hegel himself gave to the world a system of Natural Philosophy which seemed harmonious enough from the speculative point of view, but which has gone into oblivion, for the simple reason that when tested by the science of observation it was found to be as false as it was fantastical. Marx, in the sphere of economics, committed the blunder of Hegel. Scientific observation is doing for Marx's theory of value what it did for Hegel's theory of Nature—relegating it to the museum of intellectual curiosities.

So far, in dealing with Socialism, we have been mainly occupied with the demolition of the cornerstone of the system, namely, the declaration of Karl Marx that labour is the creator of wealth, or value. It has been our endeavour to show that the Socialist theory of value is erroneous. For the sake of argument, we shall assume the correctness of the Socialist contention that labour is the creator of wealth, with the object of seeing whether the conclusions drawn from it by Socialists are sound. When Socialists say that wealth is the creation of labour, it is plain that the argument will get into confusion unless we have a clear idea as to the meaning of "labour." On the face of it, surely it is absurd to restrict the meaning of the word "labour" to manual labour. This is just what Socialists do. When they talk about wealth being the creation of labour, they mean the labour of the working classes—the wage-earning classes; the capitalists, the profit-earning, and interest-receiving classes being referred to either as drones or exploiters of labour. In order to get rid of the so-called unproductive classes, it is proposed that the State should take into its own hands the instruments of production. Sometimes Socialists

recognise the existence in the industrial sphere of intellectual labour, but this element is quickly dropped out of their arguments when dealing with the sins of capitalists.

At this stage the question emerges: Has the national wealth, say during the past hundred years, been created by the wage-earning classes? If it has been created by them, then there is point in their denunciation of those who toil not neither do they spin. What, then, are the facts? It has been calculated that in proportion to the population about three times as much wealth is created now as there was in the days of our great-grandfathers. Clearly this enormous increase cannot be due to the muscular labours of the wage-earning class. To what is the increase due? To mechanical inventions and the organising ability of men who laboured, not with their hands, but with their brains. That is to say, about two-thirds of our national income is due to a force other than the muscular force of working men, namely, an intellectual force. Clearly, if labour is the creator of wealth, in the distribution of it we must bear in mind the claims of the intellectual labourers. When their claims are

satisfied, the working classes will have to be content with a small share of the national wealth—not the whole of it, as their Socialist guides would have them believe.

And here we touch upon the grave error in the definition of labour which, originating with Adam Smith, has come down through the school of orthodox economists to the school of Karl Marx. Though alive to the importance of brain power, Smith, living as he did in the pre-machinery period, could hardly help identifying labour with manual labour, and his successors only too faithfully followed in his footsteps. Since his day a new kind of labour has been imported into industry—the labour of the inventor, and the labour of the organiser, the captain of industry. The simple direct relations between seller and buyer were destroyed by the application of machinery to industry. For the simple process of barter, mentioned by Adam Smith, there came to be substituted a process so complicated that the head of a great industry was transformed into a kind of Von Moltke, whose success lay in his ability to work out on paper and carry into effect a series of elaborate



calculations. As Bagehot says: "A body of separate labourers has many of the characteristics of a mob; but one, acting under the control of a capitalist, has many of those of an army. A capitalist provides his labourers with subsistence, directs each what he shall do and when, and deduces the desired result of the whole combination at the proper time, much as a General does. He and his men will live and will produce riches where a mere multitude of labourers will starve." It will be a thousand pities if the working classes, now that they have political power, should be deluded into the notion that the capitalist is their enemy. The fact is, capitalism has been the real friend of the working classes, not from any generosity on the part of the capitalist, but from the fact that, under inexorable economic law, in a machinery and competitive age he is compelled, in order to get a fair return for his outlay, to cheapen his commodities, and this can only be done, paradoxical as it may seem, by high wages to his workers. In all this we detect the elements of enduring progress. When we say that wages are increasing, what does that mean but that

men as workers are increasing in value? And when we say that the necessities of life are growing cheaper, what does that mean but that commodities are falling in value? Both these processes mean the reverse of the Socialist reading of current tendencies. The workers are not growing poorer, but richer. The worker is not, as Karl Marx would say, being dragged at the chariot wheel of the capitalist: he is sitting with him on the box-seat, driving slowly but surely along the path of progress.

Ere the ideal of a perfect civilisation is reached, many obstacles will be encountered, but it is surely something to know that the present economic system is making for the increasing value of man by virtue of the demands made upon him. Is there not guarantee of progress in the fact that the most highly-paid worker to-day must, from economic necessity, be the most intelligent and reliable? As the workers rise in the scale of being, as their pleasures become more rational, there will spring up a demand for a higher class of commodities, which in turn will increase for the working classes the value of life.

The evils of which Socialists complain are moral as well as economic, and will not be remedied by legislative methods, least of all by the impossible idea of nationalising the means of production. Progress lies in quite another direction. It lies in supplementing economic by moral forces, in recognising that men have duties to discharge as well as rights to preserve. In the work of social regeneration all kinds of elevating agencies are necessary — economic science, the Church, social reform in various directions, and, above all, a deeper and keener sense of the brotherhood of man. All these agencies are gradually growing in strength. Much remains to be done, and will be done if the working classes will only pin their faith to evolution rather than revolution. To those who can look beyond the confusions of the moment there are visible signs of a better day. Above the din of conflicting interests and warring passions may be heard, by those who listen in the spirit of evolutionary science, the inspiring tones of the humanitarian evangel: "Peace on earth, and goodwill among men."

## CHAPTER XII.

## THE EVOLUTION OF LITERATURE.

IN endeavouring to contrast the dominating conceptions of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, we defined them respectively as the mechanical and the dynamical. The mechanical idea was no invention of the materialist thinkers of the Revolution school. It was in the air, so to speak. Religion as known to the thinkers of the Revolution, as embodied in the Roman Catholic Church, had become a purely mechanical affair, a matter of rites and ceremonies, attendance to which was enjoined if need be by compulsory methods. In the great field of literature, too, the same idea held sway. We talk much of the Renaissance as the emancipation of the human mind in the intellectual sphere, just as the Reformation represented emancipation in the religious sphere. But in the sphere of intellectualism the work of emancipation was

only half done. In their admiration of the ancients the men of the Renaissance prostrated themselves as completely before Classicalism as the devotees of the Church did before Romanism. It was not long till in the name of Classicalism a huge pile of literary dogmas was raised by which writers were to be guided and their productions tested; and thus a movement whose watchword was Reason ended in the enthronement of the principle of Authority. Even the men of scientific tendencies, like Holbach, in their revolt from the Church, gave their Naturalism dogmatic form; and when the Revolution came it was seen not to be the triumph of Reason, but simply the substitution of one kind of authority for another, a mechanical naturalism for a mechanical supernaturalism. Instead of society being ruled by the Divine Being through an authoritative priesthood by means of mechanically imposed rites and ceremonies, it was to be ruled by an abstraction called Reason through a band of authoritative philosophers and politicians, by means of compulsory measures.

In the writings of Voltaire we can see at work both the principle of revolt and the principle of authority. In religion he fought a life-long battle



for the rights of reason ; but in literature, in the name of Classicalism, he bowed before authority. The rules which the Church had formulated for production of a good life Voltaire could not tolerate, but he gave implicit submission to the rules which Classicalism had formulated for the production of good literature. Just as in the Church all the details of religion were formulated, nothing being left to the unregulated and spontaneous impulses of the individual, so in literature the writer who would aspire to fame must repress artistic impulses which were not sanctioned by the classical spirit. Under the influence of the Materialists, Nature had been mechanically mapped out into provinces, in which man, as a temporary incarnation of matter, was subject to laws which were imposed upon him from without ; so under the influence of the Classicalists literature was mapped out into provinces, the laws of which the individual writer could do nothing to modify, only obey. Classicalism did for literature what Romanism did for religion—it artificially limited the imaginative faculty, and, by creating a set of rules and dogmas, threw a blight over the spontaneous and creative impulses of the mind. Instead of the free joyousness of Nature we

breathe the atmosphere of the drawing-room. Poetry, instead of gushing in all fulness from the overflowing soul, is laboriously pumped by machinery. Instead of the classical poet coming into direct contact with Nature, he has first to lay in a stock of imagery by which Nature is conventionally described. In the words of Taine, "Good society and men of letters made a little world by themselves. They adopted a correct and noble style at the same time as fashion and fine manners. They held by this style as by their coat; it was a matter of propriety or ceremony; there was an accepted and unalterable pattern; to write not according to the rules, especially in verse, would have been like showing oneself in the drawing-room in slippers and dressing-gown." In a word, the pressure of literary authority was as heavy as the pressure of spiritual authority: heresy in either case was unpardonable. It was clear that sooner or later the spirit which led to the revolt against the authority of Romanism would also initiate revolt against Classicalism.

The revolt received its initial impulse from Rousseau. At one with the Materialists in their hatred of the existing *régime*, he was by tempera-

ment utterly opposed to their mechanical theory of life. His writings mark a new departure in the treatment of Nature and man. To the Materialists, Nature was a machine, and man a conscious part of the machine,—a part which could be dissected and understood by purely mechanical principles. What was needed for the improvement of man was simply calm, cold study of the mechanism of Nature. In such a creed there was little room for the higher sentiments of the soul. Goethe has left on record the impression made upon him by the materialistic view of life as follows: “The materialistic theory which reduces all things to matter and motion appeared to me so grey, so Cimmerian, and so dead, that we shuddered at it as at a ghost.” To Rousseau belongs the honour of overthrowing the mechanical or classical method in literature, and substituting the dynamic principle, which rests on the conception that Nature and man are organically united, and are to be understood, not by dogmas and rules, but through the mind and heart. Rousseau, in a word, represents the literary reaction against the dreary materialism of the Holbach school and the mechanical theories of the classical school.

The movement headed by Rousseau has well been described as "the natural and justifiable defence of feeling, soul, passion, and poetry, against frigid intellectuality, exact calculation, and a literature stifled by rules and dead traditions." It is easy to discover grave blemishes in Rousseau's literary work. His excessive insistence upon sentiment, and his lavish display of emotion, led to the rise of a school in which feeling degenerated into sheer sentimentality ; but, by drawing men's minds away from the mechanical sway of Nature and urging the claims of the individual heart, Rousseau shifted the artistic point of view, thereby creating a new epoch in literature. Manifestly the new standpoint demanded that man, as man, had a right to development on the side of his emotional life, apart from all authoritative restrictions, and in literature this meant artistic expression unhindered by the conventional rules of the classics. As a consequence, literature was not confined to certain restricted academic or drawing-room areas, but embraced all phases of life, including that of the common people, who were treated by the classical school more as material to be utilised for poetic purposes than as human beings

wrestling with life's sorrows and oppressed with life's mysteries. Absorbed in the study of Nature and its laws, the materialists treated man as a mere link in a fatalistic chain, an automaton in which sentiment, religious feeling, and effusive emotionalism were excrescences.

Rousseau vindicated the dignity of the human personality and paved the way for the new view of Nature and man, which in Germany, under the influence of Fichte on the philosophic and Goethe on the poetic side, started thought and culture on entirely new lines. Not that Goethe was opposed to the classical spirit. So far from that, a large part of his poetry was framed on antique models, but he distinguished between the pedantry of the French school and the genuine classical spirit. We have mentioned Fichte, because in his works the reaction against the French materialistic school is seen in its extreme form. They made Nature all in all, man being at most a phenomenal existence. Fichte, on the other hand, elevated the Ego to the first place, making it, not Nature, or the Non-Ego, the great fundamental fact. It was but a step from this to the standpoint of Goethe, who subordinated Nature to man, whose



free all-round development was, in his view, the prime purpose of existence. The French school spoke much of the supremacy of Reason, but it was Reason in the abstract, and their philosophy easily lent itself to despotism in the concrete. Even Rousseau's theory when it came to be translated into politics was as despotic as the old *régime*. But the German school when they spoke of the rights of man meant the right of the individual man to self-development. In Goethe's "Werther" we have in dramatic form the starting-point of the German reaction. Here man is no longer, as with the materialistic school, the creature of circumstances, a mere chain in Nature's operations, but the incarnation of mighty forces, will, energy, aspirations, ideas, and passions, capable of activities which find no counterpart in Nature—activities which carry within them the possibility of tragedy. In literature Werther is represented by Goethe as despising the canons of the schools, just as he despises the conventions of society. "Nature alone," he says, "fashions the great artist." The laws of art, like the laws of society, Werther treats as conventional rules. Nature to Goethe is no machine, but a great

reservoir of forces, a spiritual principle with which man is in organic unity.

The Germans did not abolish the Supernatural like the Materialist: they sought it in the Natural. The Spiritual principle according to them was not to be discovered in the scientific dissecting-room. The owl-like logic-chopper, by mechanical methods, could not discover it; the unity of things could only be apprehended by the vision of the poet. The tragedy of life consisted, as with Werther, in the attempt to satisfy the infinite part of man's nature with the finite, instead of bringing the finite into subordinate harmony with the infinite. In "Werther" we have tragedy because, in his revolt against the conventions of his time and in his disgust at the chilling limitations of his environments, Werther revolted against the fundamental laws of life as well. In "Werther" Goethe shows clearly that man is no curious piece of mechanism controlled as the French Materialists would say by self-interest and self-love, but a mysterious incarnation of spiritual energy, ready at any moment to burst forth with destructive effect. The problem for Goethe was not, as with the French school, to remodel society in the interests of the individual,

but to regulate the internal energies and powers of the individual with a view to their harmonious development. Rousseau shows the importance of the emotional side of human nature which the Materialists had ignored; Goethe set himself to understand the great world of thought and feeling, to link it in unity with the world of Nature, thereby getting a glimpse of the unity of things.

Goethe's poetry is called pantheistic, just because it dwells in the dynamic region in which Existence is seen not in the form of separate material phenomena, but rather as a great universal process whose nature can best be understood when approached from the side of poetry. In dealing with Science it was seen how step by step thinkers had been led from the conception of a mechanical Universe made up of separate and distinct existences to the conception of a Universe which was the outcome of one great dynamic process, whose unity and inspiration is spiritual, not material. In literature Rousseau did much to break down the mechanical view as regards the nature of man. It was reserved for Goethe to give complete poetic expression to the conception of the oneness of Nature, a conception in which with prophetic vision

he anticipated the great dynamic ideas with which the science of to-day is making us familiar. What is the science of to-day but a confirmation of the great utterance of Goethe with its piercing insight into the unity of things ?—

“ As all Nature’s thousand changes  
But one changeless God proclaim,  
So in Art’s wide kingdom ranges  
One sole meaning still the same.  
This is Truth, Eternal Reason,  
Which from Beauty takes its dress ;  
And serene through time and season  
Stands for aye in loveliness.”

## CHAPTER XIII.

## BURNS AND THE REVOLUTION SPIRIT.

It cannot be too strongly stated that the French Revolution is the key to the nineteenth century. "On the eve of the nineteenth century," says Taine, "the great modern revolution began in Europe. The thinking public and the human mind changed, and while these changes took place a new literature sprang up." The Revolution itself, as we saw, was the outcome of two lines of thought, which were antagonistic to the existing *régime*. The school of Voltaire and the Encyclopedists broke down the principles of religious and political authority, while Rousseau undermined the idea of caste, upon which society up till the Revolution rested, by his proclamation of the principles of equality and fraternity—principles which, when introduced into literature, gave rise to a new school of writers. In



Scotland Burns stands forth as the incarnation of the new spirit. Scotland has never been a self-sufficient, self-contained country. All through her history she has been open to cosmopolitan influences. With France in particular her relations have been specially close.

On the intellectual side, the Scotland of the Eighteenth Century drew much of her inspiration from France. Hume owed nothing to the French in the region of ideas, but by tastes and temperament he found himself more at home in Paris than in London. Adam Smith found in Paris congenial souls, and his economic studies bear marks of the French school; in fact, the great Scottish writers of the mid-Eighteenth Century drank deeply of the classical spirit of France. Great is the difference between the Humes, the Smiths, the Robertsons, and Burns. Burns seems to move in a different world from the calm, correct, somewhat frigid writers of the Hume period. What is the explanation? One reason is that the earlier Scotsmen represented the classical spirit of France, while Burns was a child of the Revolution. The classical spirit was nothing if not dignified. Essentially monarchical and aristocratic, the classi-

cal spirit was formal in utterance, conventional in style, artificial in tone, more at home in the drawing-room than in the market-place. The creature of rules, the classical spirit was nothing if not conventional. Good-breeding, decorum, frigidity were the notes of the writings which drew their inspiration from the classicalism of the pre-Revolution period. The Scottish writers of the pre-Revolution period, as has been well said, "were almost French in their taste, language, education, conception of man. They wrote without fanaticism or prejudice. But at the same time they attenuate human nature,—comprehend neither barbarism nor loftiness, paint revolutions and passions as people might do who had seen nothing but decked drawing-rooms and dusted libraries. They judge enthusiasts with the coldness of chaplains or the smile of a sceptic; they blot out the salient features which distinguish human physiognomies; they cover all the harsh points of truth with a brilliant and uniform varnish."

With Burns we enter into a new world. In him we have the two dominant notes of the Revolution—a new view of Nature, and the spirit of fraternity. In literature the new spirit took the

form of a return to Nature. The emotions, long pent up by classicalism, broke through their artificial barriers and found their natural expression in genuinely human language. Where the classical poet in stately pose apostrophised Nature, Burns, yielding himself to the charms of Nature, gave utterance to his feelings in language of poetic rapture. The influence of Burns, however, extended far beyond the region of poetry. He was one of the makers of Scotland. He was so because at a time when aristocratic influence, the spirit of caste, was at its height, he struck the democratic note. In Eighteenth Century thought and literature the people counted for little. Even advanced thinkers like Hume, who prided themselves on their freedom from old-fashioned notions, referred to the people contemptuously as "the vulgar." The ideas of social equality, or human brotherhood, never entered the minds of Eighteenth Century writers. The poets disdained seriously to consider the people, except for artistic ends. The people were utilised in literature for picturesque purposes. Even Allan Ramsay, who breathed the spirit of humanity, could not rid himself when treating of the poor of a certain air of condescension.

What Burns did was to break down the spirit of caste, to proclaim the rights and merits of the people, and to give them their true place in the nation's history. With his "A man's a man for a' that," Burns brushed aside the supercilious contempt of the philosophers, the callous indifference of the politicians, and the mawkish sentimentality of the poets. He taught the Scottish peasant to hold his head erect. The working man of high soul held his patent of nobility, not from the gilded creatures of a day, but from Almighty God. Moreover, Burns tore the veil from the namby-pamby poetry of the Eighteenth Century, with its rural nymphs and swains. From the very heart of Nature Burns gave utterance to the sorrows, the joys, the tragedies, the comedies, the bliss and the squalor, the fleeting pleasures and the grinding poverty, of the common people. The poets and philosophers of the Eighteenth Century had created an imaginary world, in which Arcadian happiness and simplicity were the dominant features. Outside the drawing-room of frigid philosophers and sentimental poets, Burns revealed a rural world filled with injustice and misery, and in doing so he gave a great impetus to the movement which led

to the political liberation of the people. The fact that Burns championed the cause of the people would not of itself have made him one of the makers of Scotland. He was something greater than the poet of humble life, and the vehicle of social and political discontent. While dealing in grim, realistic fashion with the facts of humble life, Burns, by his poetic handling of these facts in inimitable song, touched the national heart and fostered the spirit of patriotism which has united all Scotsmen apart altogether from their social and political status. An utterance of Burns breaks down all social distinction. All petty feelings, all sordid jealousies, all social and political rivalries, flee away at the touch of the wand of the great magician who has revealed to his countrymen a land of poesy and song, to which they ever return with unanimous enthusiasm and undying delight. Out of the French Revolution sprang Napoleon, whose world-wide despotism gave birth to the spirit of nationality. Burns anticipated the spirit of nationality, which only sprang up long after his death. This he did by his revival of the Scottish dialect. If Scotland has a distinctly national life, the fact is largely due to the songs of



Burns. There was a time in our history when it seemed as if, as the result of the Union, the intellectual as well as the political individuality of Scotland was to suffer an eclipse.

The writers of the time, ashamed of the Scottish dialect, set themselves energetically to cultivate the English language, and to draw their inspiration, such as it was, from alien sources. In one of his Burns orations, Lord Rosebery puts the matter very clearly and concisely as follows: "From the time of the union of the Crowns, and still more from the time of the legislative Union, Scotland had lapsed into obscurity. Except for an occasional riot or a Jacobite rising, her existence was almost forgotten. She had, indeed, her Robertsons and her Humes writing history to general admiration, but no trace of Scottish authorship was discoverable in their works: indeed, every flavour of national idiom was carefully excluded. The Scottish dialect, as Burns called it, was in danger of perishing. Burns seemed at this juncture to start to his feet and reassert Scotland's claim to national existence: his Scottish notes rang through the world, and he thus preserved the Scottish language for ever—for mankind will never allow to die that

idiom in which his songs and poems were enshrined. That is a part of Scotland's debt to Burns."

We are all familiar with Fletcher of Saltoun's remark about the moulding influence of songs upon a nation's life. Everything depends upon the character of the songs. We have all read of the effect which the songs of Zion, sung by the waters of Babylon, had in preserving and intensifying the national life of the Jews, and giving to them an individuality which has survived persecutions the most terrible and circumstances the most tragic. The songs of Scotland in their primitive state could scarcely have had the elevating influence of which Fletcher speaks. As Lord Rosebery, in his matchless oration at Dumfries on the centenary of the death of Burns, said: "Many of Burns' songs were already in existence in the lips and minds of the people—rough and coarse and obscene. Our benefactor takes them, and with a touch of inspired alchemy transmutes them and leaves them pure gold. He loved the old catches and the old tunes, and into these gracious moulds he poured his exquisite gifts of thought and expression. But for him those ancient airs, often wedded to words which no decent

man could recite, would have perished from that corruption, if not from neglect. He rescued them for us by his songs, and in doing so he hallowed the life and sweetened the breath of Scotland." Carlyle has left on record his belief that it is upon his songs that the greatest influence of Burns will rest. "In hut and hall," says Carlyle, "as the heart unfolds itself in many-coloured joy and woe, the name, the voice of that joy and woe, is the name which Burns has given them. With what tenderness he sings, yet with what vehemence and entireness! There is a piercing wail in his sorrow, the purest rapture in his joy. He burns with the sternest ire, he laughs with the loudest; and yet he is sweet and soft, 'sweet as the smile when fond lovers meet, and soft as their parting tear.'"

In another sphere, that of religion, Burns caught the Revolution spirit, the Deism of Rousseau. Round religion traditionalism had woven a complex web of dogmas, rules, and conventionalities. Passing by these, Burns sought to kindle religious emotion by direct contact with the source of religion. His Deism, like the Pantheism of Goethe, had its root in the same feeling as his poetry—namely, the feeling that God, like Nature, was apprehended

through the emotions rather than through tradition. May we not attribute the serious flaws in the character of Burns also to the spirit of the French Revolution? Return to Nature for the French thinkers too often meant, in the sphere of personal habits, the abandonment of those ethical rules which act as a check upon the primitive nature of man, and aid him on the march to the higher life. The abandonment to impulse and emotion which, in the sphere of poetry, is necessary to the production of the highest work, in the sphere of life has a destructive effect. Burns professed himself a Deist, a believer in the natural goodness of man, and yet where will you find in literature deeper testimony than in his utterances to the reality of the Pauline doctrine of sin? In spite of himself, Burns finds himself again and again worsted in the conflict, until we fancy we can hear him uttering with piercing vehemence the words of Paul, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

The soul of Burns was torn in conflict between two antagonistic forces—the impulse of pleasure, which the Revolution thinkers glorified under the phrase Return to Nature, and the sense of duty,

which he inherited from the religion of his childhood. Herein lay the tragedy of the life of Burns. Like Goethe's Werther, in breaking with purely social conventions, he also broke with the fundamental laws of social life. Burns was at once epicurean and religious,—at once Pagan and Christian. In him were incarnated the spirit which made the Revolution and the spirit which made the Reformation. He was too deeply religious to find complete satisfaction in a life of pleasure, hence his remorse, and he was not religious enough to resist the allurements of the satanic trinity—the world, the devil, and the flesh. And yet in spite of, or may it not be because of, the tragedy of his life, Scotsmen cling close to the memory of Burns. In the words of Carlyle, “in pitying admiration he lies enshrined in all our hearts.” In the great revolutionary movement which ushered in the higher life and thought of the nineteenth century, Burns was a mighty factor.



## CHAPTER XIV.

## THE LITERATURE OF REACTION. °

WE have already shown how in reaction against the materialists of the Revolution school Goethe's writings gave birth in Germany to a new type of literature, in which the Universe and man were viewed from a new standpoint. The remarkable feature of the reaction was that it extended to all phases of thought. In France systems arose whose first principles were directed against the theories of the Revolution school. Against these theories the Roman Catholic section headed by De Maistre, the Royalists inspired by Chateaubriand, and the Metaphysicians stimulated by the Eclectic school, united their forces; and out of this atmosphere grew a new kind of poetry, which, especially in Germany, lifted the mind out of the Slough of Despond into which it had

been dragged by the materialism of the Revolution philosophy. That philosophy had been prosaic; the new philosophy was romantic. The one looked upon the past records of humanity as a nightmare, in which two hideous figures—Superstition and Despotism—stood out in grim prominence; the other idealised the past, and threw around it a halo of romance. To understand the work of the Romantic school, we must have a clear idea of the conception of man and history against which they protested. With the Revolution thinkers man, treated as an abstraction, was denuded of all distinctions. In the words of Professor Dowden: "Man was not conceived as growing out of the past; the heritage from former generations was a heritage of superstition, tyranny, unreason; it exists only to be relinquished or destroyed. The year One has arrived, and the world is to be reconstructed without reference to inheritance, or accumulated tendencies, on the principles of Reason." In this country, on the political side, Burke headed the reaction. He pleaded powerfully for the view which now finds support in the doctrine of Evolution—that of the continuity of humanity,

and the relative values of governments, customs, and civilisation which are alien to our own. In Germany the reaction took the form of the vindication of the rights of the individual to free self-development and the development in literature of the historic spirit. Classicalism being out of fashion, the Romantic school concentrated upon the Middle Ages. As a protest, too, against the narrow mechanical philosophy of the Revolution, there grew up a type of philosophical literature in which the great theories of man and his destiny were handled.

In England and Scotland the new movement found representatives in Scott, Wordsworth, Southey, and Coleridge; in France in Hugo, Lamartine, and others; and in Germany in Goethe, Schiller, Novalis, and a whole host of lesser writers. From Germany the new spirit was brought to this country by Scott, who caught the romantic fever while translating Bürger's "The Wild Huntsman" and Goethe's "Goetz von Berlichingen"—pieces which fired his blood and inspired him with the ambition to find an outlet for his romantic genius in the history of his native land. It would be manifestly out of place here

to deal in detail with the novels and poems of Scott. Sufficient for the present purpose to note that Scott gave artistic expression to the truth to which Burke gave political expression—namely, that the past, which the Revolution thinkers had maligned, had a beauty and grandeur of its own. From those regions which the revolutionary school had traduced, Scott, by his magic wand, summoned new worlds, and in so doing opened new intellectual fountains of delight for a generation which was sick unto death of materialistic theories of man and utilitarian theories of society. Carlyle has made it a complaint against Scott that he was content with being a mere story-teller,—that he had no message to his day and generation. The criticism is not quite fair. In Scott's day there were too many writers with messages. There were theological, philosophical, and literary messengers, all putting forth their theories of man and his destiny, too often regardless of the real living historical man.

It was Scott's mission to lift men's minds away from theories and abstractions and bring them into direct contact with real living men. What

Burns did for nature, Scott did for humanity. Burns drove from the field of poetry the artificial sentiments and mythological conceits of classicism, and Scott banished from the field of history the superficial conceptions of a shallow philosophy, and revealed humanity, not as an assemblage of serfs brutalised by two kindred despots,—the king and the priest,—but as members of a social order, rough in texture, it is true, but linked together by feelings not entirely ignoble, and frequently illuminated by the chivalrous and the heroic. On his limitations it is not necessary to dwell. The aim here is chiefly to trace the influence which Scott exerted upon the literature of this country. The total impression of that influence is well summed up in the words of Professor Masson: “Remembering all that Scott has left us,—those imperishable tales and romances which no subsequent successes in the British literature of fiction have superseded, and by the genius of which our little land of brown heath and shaggy wood, formerly of small account in the world, has become a dream and fascination for all the leisurely of all the nations,—need we cease after from thinking



of him in juxtaposition, or on a level, at least, with England's greatest man, the whole world's greatest man, of the literary world, or abandon the habit of speaking of Sir Walter Scott as our Scottish Shakespeare." But Scott did more than throw a halo of romance around his native land. He gave a great impetus to the historical side of the Romantic movement. As the author of the 'History of Comparative Literature' says: "The author of the Waverley Novels was for France as well as England the founder of the modern novel; he was also one of the reformers of historical writings. Before his time it lacked the dramatic and the picturesque elements. His influence became European, and had its effect in different ways on Manzoni in Italy, Fouqué in Germany, and in France on Victor Hugo, Alexandre Dumas, De Vigny, Mérimée, and Balzac and his successors."

The literary reaction took two forms—the historical and the philosophical. The one is represented in Scott and in some of the poems of Coleridge and Southey; the other in Goethe and Wordsworth, in whose writings the shallow and material conception of Nature and man of the

Revolution period is opposed by a profounder insight into the meaning of life, and a deeper insight into the nature and working of the human soul. In Goethe both forms of the reaction were combined, but it is in his "Faust," in treating of the great spiritual forces of the soul, that the poet lifts us into regions far above the murky atmosphere of Materialism. Wordsworth in a manner all his own also lifts the reader into the ampler air by his poetic interpretation of Nature and man. He is at one with Goethe in protesting against the mechanical theory of life. He refuses to believe that the world and all that is therein is explainable in terms of matter and motion. Wordsworth, like Goethe, gives poetic expression to the view that Nature and man find their unity and purpose in an All-Embracing Spiritual Being, who is the inner unity and soul of all things. The nature of the Divine Being they do not discuss; they recognise the limitations of human thought, and are content with the knowledge that, far as the Divine Being is removed from scientific classification, He is still the source of all truth and beauty in the Universe and the source of the

soul's highest inspiration. Not only did Wordsworth, like Goethe, believe that the last word of science, philosophy, and poetry was Spirit, not Matter, but, like Goethe, he believed that the secrets of Nature were revealed, not to the scientific dryasdust, but to those only who approach her in the spirit of love and adoration. Wordsworth has given in the following lines the fundamental conception of Existence which underlies all his poetry :

“For I have learned  
 To look on Nature, not as in the hour  
 Of thoughtless youth ; but hearing oftentimes  
 The still, sad music of humanity,  
 Not harsh nor grating, though of ample power  
 To chasten and subdue. And I have felt  
 A presence that disturbs me with the joy  
 Of elevated thoughts ; a sense sublime  
 Of something far more deeply interfused,  
 Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,  
 And the round ocean and the living air,  
 And the blue sky and in the mind of man :  
 A motion and a spirit that impels  
 All thinking things, all objects of all thought,  
 And rolls through all things.”

Notice how Wordsworth, in his highest poetic mood, anticipates the latest conclusions of science and philosophy in regard to the constitution of

the Universe, which is now viewed, not as made up of a vast assemblage of distinct existences, but as the outcome of a great dynamic or spiritual process, the separate existences being simply symbols, temporal incarnations of the Eternal Spirit :

“To every form of being is assigned  
An active principle : howe’er removed  
From sense and observation, it subsists  
In all things, in all natures ; in the stars  
Of azure heaven, the unenduring clouds,  
In flower and tree, in every pebbly stone  
That paves the brooks, the stationary rocks,  
The moving waters, and the invisible air,  
Whate’er exists has properties that spread  
Beyond itself, communicating good,  
A simple blessing, or with evil mixed ;  
Spirit that knows no insulated spot,  
No chasm, no solitude ; from link to link  
It circulates, the Soul of all the worlds,  
This is the freedom of the universe,  
Unfolded still the more, more visible  
The more we know ; and yet is revered least,  
And least respected in the human Mind,  
Its most apparent home.”

How does man stand related to what Wordsworth calls “the Soul of all the worlds” ? The science of the Materialists of the Revolution represented man as a complex arrangement of

matter, conscious of other beings like himself and of a material environment, but having no conscious relation to the unknown Cause of Existence. The latest word of science and philosophy regarding the source of all things is that man is ever in presence of an Infinite and Eternal Power, spiritual in its essence and all-embracing in its compass. Nay more, between spiritual energy in man and the Infinite and Eternal Energy there is an affinity, nay, almost identity.

The energy which in man manifests itself as consciousness is simply a manifestation of the Infinite Energy. Unless we are to lapse into Pantheism, we must fall back upon a theory, which, while preserving personality, leaves room for the possibility of communion between the divine and the human. In the material universe there is no such thing as isolated phenomena; all forms of existence are dynamically related. In that case, between the Universal Spirit and the mind and heart of man there must be affinity. Here, too, Wordsworth anticipates modern thought when he declares that the external world is fitted to the mind, which, more-



over, responds to the great fundamental facts of Existence, Truth, Goodness, Beauty, Love, and Hope. Wordsworth puts aside the mechanical psychology which resolves knowledge into mundane experience, and morality into utility. He maintains that in the deepest structure of the soul are embedded intuitions, which experience does not create, but simply awakens to activity. How beautifully does Wordsworth render this thought in "The Excursion":

" I have seen

A curious child who dwelt upon a tract  
Of inland ground applying to his ear  
The convolution of a smooth-lipped shell,  
To which, in silence hushed, his very soul  
Listened intently; and his countenance soon  
Brightened with joy; for murmurings from within  
Were heard—sonorous cadences, whereby,  
To his belief, the monitor expressed  
Mysterious union with its native sea.  
Even such a shell the universe itself  
Is to the ear of Faith; and there are times,  
I doubt not, when to you it doth impart  
Authentic tidings of invisible things;  
Of ebb and flow and ever-during power;  
And central peace, subsisting in the heart  
Of endless agitation. Here you stand,  
Adore, and worship, when you know it not;  
Pious beyond the intention of your thought;  
Devout above the meaning of your will."

It has been already seen how Goethe, in his reaction against the mechanical philosophy of the Revolution school, reached, and gave poetic expression to, the thought to which modern science tends, that all phenomena are but the visible symbols of the one Abiding Reality, the inner life of all that is. "Nature's thousand changes," says Goethe, "but one changeless God proclaim." This same idea inspires the poetry of Wordsworth, and like a golden thread runs through the poetry of Coleridge. What, then, in presence of this new view of Existence, is the duty of man? The Materialists held that man's duty began and ended in learning the laws of Nature and giving himself up to their mechanical sway. Not so Wordsworth. He denounces the mechanical and utilitarian science and philosophy which, "viewing all things unremittingly in disconnection dead and spiritless, breaks down all grandeur." According to Wordsworth, "We live by Admiration, Hope, and Love, and even as these are well and wisely fixed, in dignity of being we ascend." Just as the French Revolution mightily affected the thought of the time,

philosophic, political, and poetic, so the reaction which followed produced a great effect on the literature of the period,—an effect which finds expression in the writings of Byron and Shelley.

## CHAPTER XV.

## THE LITERATURE OF REVOLT.

IN one of his essays Mr John Morley has the following observation: "Poetry, and not only poetry but every channel of emotional expression and æsthetic culture, confessedly moves with the general march of the human mind, and Art is only the transformation into ideal and imaginative shapes of a predominant system and philosophy of life." Minor verse-writers, he goes on to say, may fairly be consigned without disrespect to the literature of taste, but the loftier masters "come to us with the size of great historic forces, for they represent the hopes and energies, the dreams and the consummation, of the human intelligence, in its enormous movements." This is the justification of the method adopted here of passing over hosts of minor writers, and seizing only upon

those in whose works are embodied the ruling ideas of the time. We selected Goethe, Scott, and Wordsworth as representatives of the forces which culminated in the reactionary movement which was caused by the French Revolution. We now select Shelley and Byron as representative embodiments and interpreters of the spirit of revolt which grew out of the social, political, and national conditions which followed the dramatic and epoch-making events culminating at Waterloo. Napoleon, a child of the Revolution, had grown into a despotic monster, whose very existence was an enemy to all that went by the name of liberty. To crush him Europe combined, and when the lion was at last safely caged in St Helena, all Europe sent up an exultant shout of freedom.

Naturally, those Powers which had been instrumental in crushing Napoleon took upon themselves the task of bringing order out of the confusion which the destroyers of nations had caused. Out of this sprang the Holy Alliance. The Emperors of Russia and Austria and King Frederick William, a month after the imprisonment of Napoleon, signed a treaty of



alliance for the future government of Europe. On behalf of Britain, Lord Castlereagh entered the Alliance, which was called "holy" because the respective Monarchs declared that in the task of governing Europe they would "take for their sole guide the precepts of the holy religion of our Saviour—the precepts of justice, Christian charity, and peace." The time seemed propitious for such a movement. As a result of the reaction against the Revolution, religion, as embodied in the Church, had got back her old authority; philosophy, under the sway of Germany, had taken on a conservative hue; and poetry, under the influence of Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Southey, confronted the forces of revolution with an appeal to the instinct of order. As the present writer has elsewhere remarked: "Ideas, religious and philosophic, and political institutions resting upon the principle of authority, which immediately after the Revolution were looked upon as houses of refuge from the great storm, were by the Holy Alliance used as prisons for the free spirit of man." It was not long till the new despotism produced a reaction, which took the form of a revival of the revolutionary spirit.

The spirit of revolt took many forms. In the name of freedom, thinkers of the school of Paine directly assailed the principle of authority as embodied in Church Establishments; in the name of freedom, philosophy of the type of Bentham and James Mill attacked the German system of thought, which, as represented in England by Coleridge, defended authoritative systems on the basis of intuitional beliefs; and in the name of freedom the Revolution, working through heroic souls, began the work of national liberation, the culmination of which in these days we find in the rise of great nationalities, inspired by the spirit of democracy.

Those great movements were bound to find expression in the literature of the time, especially in poetry. In Shelley and Byron we find hatred of tyranny and love of liberty in a form at once concentrated and intense. Shelley and Byron were emphatically the poets of revolt. In Shelley the revolt against the new despotism contained elements which were not to be found in the Revolution school. It was dominated by the materialistic spirit. It appealed to the purely earthly side of human nature. Hatred

of kings and priests formed the staple of the revolutionary philosophy. With the intellectual yearnings, the spiritual cravings, the sense of life's mystery, which press heavily on the lonely thinker, they did not meddle. Rousseau, it is true, struck the note of Individualism, but not till we come to Shelley do we find the two things in combination, — intense hatred of the existing order, along with an intense sense of the mystery and littleness of life when contrasted with the awful forces and grandeur of Nature. In addition, we have in Shelley a profound sense of the infinite capacities of the individual man, — capacities which need for their satisfaction something more sustaining and enduring than can be supplied by any rearrangement of the social order. What kind of millennium of utilitarianism, with its gospel of comfort, could satisfy the yearning soul who gives utterance to such lines as those which Shelley addresses to the skylark?—

“Hail to thee, blithe Spirit !  
 Bird thou never wert,  
 That from heaven, or near it,  
 Pourest thy full heart  
 In profuse strains of unpremeditated art.

Higher still and higher  
 From the earth thou springest,  
 Like a cloud of fire ;  
 The blue deep thou wingest,  
 And singing still dost soar, and soaring ever singest.

. . . . .

With thy clear keen joyance  
 Languor cannot be ;  
 Shadow of annoyance  
 Never came near thee ;  
 Thou lovest, but ne'er knew love's sad satiety.

. . . . .

We look before and after,  
 And pine for what is not ;  
 Our sincerest laughter  
 With some pain is fraught :  
 Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought."

In contrast, too, with the puny, ephemeral strivings of mortals, Shelley places Nature with its vast rolling panorama :

" Worlds and worlds are rolling ever  
 From creation to decay,  
 Like the bubbles on a river,  
 Sparkling, bursting, borne away."

In this swelling tide of tumultuous being is there nothing permanent? Is man and Nature a mere accidental combination of material atoms?

“The One remains, the many change and pass;  
 Heaven’s light forever shines, Earth’s shadows fly;  
 Life, like a dome of many-coloured glass,  
 Stains the white radiance of Eternity.”

In one of his wayward moods Matthew Arnold speaks of Shelley “beating in the void his luminous wings in vain.” To a critic who defends poetry as a criticism of life it is natural that Byron, with his rapid melodramatic movement, his narrow outlook, his surging emotionalism, should appear a master-mind when compared with the idealistic, spiritual Shelley, who, anticipating the vast discoveries of Science, finds the congenial home of the soul in the contemplation of the Eternal Spirit, the Soul of the World. But Shelley was something more than the poet of Nature,—something more, too, than a lyric poet of unsurpassed tenderness and compass. An Individualist of the most extreme type, he was the first of the Revolution school to discover that no social rearrangements will avail if they are not inspired and pervaded by the spirit of fraternity. Rousseau had much to say of brotherhood, but it was a brotherhood compatible with the cruellest despotism. Not so



Shelley. With a heart tender as any mother's, he yearned for a time when love, like a golden chain, would bind the world of man into harmony. While the official religion was aiding the State in its ghastly work of despotism and persecution, Shelley was bent upon Christianising politics, and pleading for a sociology which would bring the world nearer the ideal of the Sermon on the Mount. With a more subtle insight into Nature than Wordsworth, he surpassed Wordsworth in intensity of human sympathy. Professor Dowden sums up the life-work of Shelley admirably when he says: "In the earlier years of the century the democratic movement concerned itself too exclusively with the individual and his rights, and regarded too little his duties, affections, and privileges as a member of society. It is partly the glory of Shelley's poetry that in some degree he anticipated the sentiment of the second half of our century, when we desire more to construct or reconstruct than to destroy."

But before reconstruction was possible, destruction had to play an important part, and for this Byron was admirably qualified. In his

poetry the spirit of revolt is incarnated. In vain we look to Byron for profound views of Nature. He has none of Shelley's ethereality. Nature, which he describes in language of moving magnificence, is never spiritualised as with Shelley; it is rather used as a background for human emotion and passion. Byron as a poet has no speculative power; his ideas are conventional. Deficient in ideas, Byron moves not among the subtle forces of Nature, but among the cyclonic. His turbulent soul he finds mirrored in the wild, majestic, gloomy, and awe-striking forces of Nature, and with these qualities he clothes his somewhat melodramatic heroes. Byron is never far away from human life on the active, not on the contemplative, side. He met the errors of his age not by truth, but by scorn and by defiant cynicism; he tore the veil from all kinds of hypocrisy, and vindicated the principle of liberty. But with Byron liberty, especially personal liberty, was scarcely distinguishable from licence, and in defying conventional standards he too frequently defied the eternal laws which underlie the social order.

Byron was a great force in his day, but as the poet of a passing phase of British life his popularity has passed away. The Byronic gospel of negation, cynicism, along with the lowness of his poetic aims, prevent him taking a high place in the poetic hierarchy. Had he chosen themes of abiding interest, Byron, with his matchless command of poetic language, his soul-stirring rhythm, would have stood supreme among the poets of the time. But, like the man with the muck-rake, he had not the upward look. Where Wordsworth gives us an ode to Immortality, Byron can rise no higher than an ode to Immorality. The truth is, Byron's best and most enduring work was associated with his battle for national liberty. He spared not the tyrant, and by his noble stand on behalf of downtrodden nations he kindled throughout Europe the sacred flame of liberty. In the following lines we have the real Byron :

“They never fail who die  
In a great cause; the block may soak their gore;  
Their heads may sodden in the sun; their limbs  
Be strung to city gates and castle walls—  
But still their spirit walks abroad. Though years  
Elapse, and others share as dark a doom,

They but augment the deep and sweeping thoughts  
Which overpower all others, and conduct  
The world at last to freedom."

Mazzini has left on record a noble tribute to this side of Byron's influence. "The day will come," says Mazzini, "when Democracy will remember all that it owes to Byron. England, too, will, I hope, one day remember the mission — so entirely English, and yet hitherto overlooked by her — which Byron fulfilled on the Continent, the European *rôle* given by him to English literature, and the sympathy for England which he awakened amongst us. From him dated the sympathy of all the true-hearted amongst us for this land of liberty, whose true function he so worthily represented amongst the oppressed. He led the genius of Britain on a pilgrimage throughout all Europe."

## CHAPTER XVI.

## GEORGE ELIOT AND THE EVOLUTION SPIRIT.

SYSTEMS of philosophy and the abstract conceptions of science do not directly influence the public mind. Between the people and the great masters of thought there stand a number of popular writers, who, through the medium of fictional and poetical literature, clothe the abstract thoughts of the thinkers with flesh and blood. The speculative views of man and his destiny of the French Revolution school would have remained in the region of the abstract had they not been popularised and scattered broadcast by men like Diderot, Voltaire, and Rousseau. Rousseau's novels, saturated as they were with Revolution views, transformed into current coin the speculations of the few. We have endeavoured to show how the Revolution was gradually superseded by the Evolution conception of man



and society. In this process of development fiction and poetry have been influential factors. Just as we found in Rousseau the literary expression of the Revolution modes of thought, in Goethe and Wordsworth the literary exponents of the Reaction, and in Shelley and Byron the representatives of the revival of the Revolution school, so we find in the literature of our time deep traces of the pregnant conceptions of the Evolution idea.

In fiction the most noted representative of the Evolution system of thought is George Eliot. Not that the new ideas were entirely absent from other novelists. Writers like Thackeray, Dickens, and the Brontës could not escape the intellectual environment of their time. Dealing as they did more particularly with human nature from the standpoint of the social medium, with the secondary passions of humanity as distinguished from the elemental broodings of the mind upon the great mysteries of life, these novelists take little account of the spiritual element in human life. With George Eliot it is otherwise. Her novels are not intended for the amusement of the idle hours. She was too

great an artist to make her characters, as Byron frequently did, vehicles for the propagation of individual opinions. While faithful to nature in her delineation of character, George Eliot at the same time combines with her art a coherent system of philosophy by which she interprets human life. George Eliot, in a word, is at once a realist and an idealist. She is a realist as regards her scrupulously faithful portraiture of human life as it is, and she is an idealist in respect of her dissatisfaction with life as it is, and her yearnings for a higher form of life. How is this higher form to be reached? In her answer to this question we come at once to the great difference between the Revolution and the Evolution schools. According to writers like Rousseau and Godwin, the higher forms of life can only be reached by the total destruction of the lower. Everything that did not conform to Reason was to be swept away. The past, which was nothing but a record of hideous crimes and superstition, was to be completely broken with, and man was to make a fresh millennial start. This comes of making Reason, as manifested in the individual, the final judge of social progress

and utility, and the happiness of the individual the final standard of morality. But the adoption of the Evolution conception makes such a creed no longer possible. If the present is organically connected with the past, clearly the one can only be understood through the other; and if the rightness and wrongness of intellectual ideas and ethical codes are not, as the Revolution and Bentham schools thought, the products of the individual mind, but the products of racial experiences, clearly the past as the fountainhead of those ideas and codes becomes of supreme interest to the philosopher. We saw how, in opposition to the intellectual iconoclasm of the Revolution school, the Romantic movement, as represented by Scott in this country, came into existence. But resting as it did on no definite philosophic or scientific basis, Romanticism led to little definite result. It is worth noting that the Evolution conception combined at once the deference to Reason of the Revolution school with the reverence for the past of the Romantic school. The combination is made by means of the Spencerian conception of humanity as an organic whole, the successive epochs being but

stages in a great evolutionary process, and by the Darwinian conception of heredity and natural selection, which lead to the conclusion that ideas and institutions which survive into the present prove by their survival their title to survive.

When we come to the study of George Eliot's books we are conscious of entering into a region of thought and feeling in which justice is done to the progressive ideas of the present and the traditions of the past. George Eliot's view of the value of the past is seen in the remark of Maggie Tulliver: "If the past is not to bind us, where can duty lie? We should have no law but the inclination of the moment." George Eliot's evolution view of man is well expressed by one of her critics: "Tradition is the inherited experience of the race, the result of its long efforts, its many struggles after a larger life. It lives in the tendencies of our emotions, in the intuitions and aspirations of our minds, as the wisdom which our minds hold dear, as the yearnings of our hearts after a wider social life. These things are not the results of our own reasonings, but they are the results of the life lived by those who have gone before us, and who, by their

thoughts and deeds, have shaped our lives, our minds, to what they are. Tradition is the inherited experience, feeling, yearning, pain, sorrow, and wisdom of the ages. It furnishes a great system of customs, laws, institutions, ideas, motives, and feelings into which we are born, which we naturally adopt, which gives shape and strength to our growing life, which makes it possible for us to take up life at that stage it has reached after the experiences of many generations." Quite in the spirit of evolution philosophy George Eliot remarks: "Our sentiments may be called organised traditions, and a large part of our actions gather all their justification, all their attractions and aroma, from the memory of the life lived, the actions done before we were born."

In essence this appreciation of the past is the same as that which characterised Romanticism, —from which, however, it differs in throwing a halo over the unrecorded deeds of unrecorded people, rather than in glorifying a heroic past in which Romanticism in ignorance of scientific method and the historical spirit was apt to run riot. We cannot conceive of the following passage from 'Middlemarch' being written by



a disciple of the Revolution school with its contemptuous attitude toward the past, or by a Romanticist with his identification of the heroic with the dramatic in history: "Her [Dorothea's] finely-touched spirit had still its fine issues, though they were not widely visible. Her full nature, like that river of which Cyrus broke the strength, spent itself in channels which had no great name on the earth. But the effect of her being on those around her was incalculably diffusive; for the growing good of the world is partly dependent on unhistoric acts; and that things are not so ill with you and me as they might have been is half owing to the number who lived faithfully a hidden life and rest in unvisited tombs." Rejecting, with the Experience school of Mill, belief in the supernatural, and paying homage to Reason, George Eliot, as the outcome of her scientific environment, widened the Experience philosophy so as to embrace, in addition to the invariability of natural law, the ideas of heredity, tradition, custom, and, above all, feeling. The Benthamites dealt with human life as if it were a problem in logic. According to them, ideas are the motive power of progress.

George Eliot recognises the fact that in human affairs feeling and sentiment play a larger part than reason and logic.

Feeling, which with the Benthamites was a sign of weakness, with George Eliot is the golden chain which binds the generations together and sweetens daily life. Thus we find her in 'Janet's Repentance' saying: "Blessed influence of one true loving human soul on another! Not calculable by algebra, not deducible by logic, but mysterious, effectual, mighty as the hidden process by which the tiny seed is quickened, and bursts forth into tall stem and broad leaf, and glowing, tasselled flower. Ideas are often poor ghosts. . . . But sometimes they are made flesh; they breathe upon us with warm breath; they touch us with soft responsive hands; they look at us with sad, sincere eyes, and speak to us in appealing tones; they are clothed in a living human soul with all its conflicts, its faith, and its love. Then their presence is a power; then they shake us like a passion, and we are drawn after them with gentle compulsion, as flame is drawn to flame." The keener became George Eliot's appreciation of the uniformity of law, the force

of heredity, and her sense of the tragedies which grow out of the clashing of human passions and temperaments, the more vividly she felt the need of tender, loving sympathy to take the place of the religious consolations of which her scientific philosophy had robbed human life.

To Comte, rather than to Spencer, George Eliot owed her attitude toward life. Spencer considered his task done when he traced in the calm spirit of scientific method the evolution of humanity: Comte was not content till he united to the new historical spirit the religious spirit. Though George Eliot did not accept Positivism in the spirit of discipleship, she was at one with Comte in holding the new view of the organic unity of humanity,—a view which demanded a new ethical standard for the individual, and a new spirit of reverence towards the memories of those through whose unrecorded sacrifices we had become sharers of a larger and fuller social life. Such a view of life demanded, too, a wider and more expansive ethical system than was supplied by the Utilitarianism of the Bentham school, with its emphasis upon the happiness of the individual. From the standpoint of science, Spencer shows the

large and increasing influence upon human action of Altruism. Comte founds his system of Social Philosophy upon Altruism, and George Eliot makes effective use of it in her interpretation of human life. In opposition to the doctrine of self-satisfaction, she declares in one of her poems that "every change upon this earth is bought with sacrifice." Sorrow, too, which is looked upon by Utilitarians as an alien element, is made by George Eliot a potent instrument for the discipline of character. Maggie Tulliver, for instance, came to know "that new sense which is the gift of sorrow, that susceptibility to the bare offices of humanity which raises them into a bond of loving fellowship." In the teaching of George Eliot morality is not, as with the narrow Experience school, a means of retailing happiness by the rough standard of individual pleasure, but a means of entering with a large, tender, loving, self-sacrificing sympathy into the many-sided and sorrow-stained life of the race. This losing of self in the larger life of humanity is the keynote of Christian ethics. But in Christianity self-sacrifice is quite compatible with the prolongation of personality beyond the grave. George Eliot's Positivist beliefs closed

to her this hope. She is content to know that though her personality is blotted out, her influence will go to swell the volume of human worth. In her own beautiful lines :

“O may I join the choir invisible  
Of those immortal dead who live again  
In minds made better by their presence ; live  
In pulses stirred to generosity  
In deeds of daring rectitude, in scorn  
For miserable aims that end with self,  
In thoughts sublime that pierce the night like stars,  
And with their mild persistence urge men’s search  
To vaster issues.”

In essence George Eliot’s system of thought as revealed in her writings agrees with Comte’s worship of humanity—a worship showing itself in reverential memories of the past, beneficent self-sacrificing deeds in the present, and in the future impersonal presence in the “choir invisible.” Is this to be the final message to mankind of the Evolution philosophy? If so, then Evolution fails to reach to the unity of things. George Eliot, under the guidance of Comte, succeeds where the Revolution thinkers failed, in giving unity to human society as such by substituting the ideas of collective reverence for the past, sympathy and duty in the present, for the Revolution



individualism with its hatred of the past, its bitter class antagonism in the present, its harsh emphasis on right, and its worship of material pleasure. But a philosophy which aims at completeness must link in one system God, man, and society. By leaving God in the region of the Unknowable, while exercising toleration to all kinds of religious sentiment, George Eliot ends in negation just at the point where the human heart craves for something positive. In her system man remains a prisoner in the hands of Fate, a prisoner whose dread day of execution is fast approaching. If the highest duty of the prisoner is to consist in kindly memories of the long array of prisoners who have preceded him, and kindly acts to those who share his cell, the music of the "choir invisible," one would think, would partake more of a funeral dirge than of the exultant note of triumph of a Paul: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." In Bunyan's 'Pilgrim's

Progress' the storm-tossed, weary, oft - tempted traveller is cheered on his journey by visions of the celestial city. Humanity will not readily close its eyes to those visions till Positivism has something better to offer to its pilgrims than a niche in the dreary Temple of Annihilation.

## CHAPTER XVII.

## THE PHILOSOPHY OF ROBERT BROWNING.

THE immediate effect of the Evolution theory as philosophically expressed by Spencer, and scientifically taught by Darwin, was to give a new lease of life to Materialism, which, however, in deference to religious susceptibilities, changed its name to Agnosticism. A zealous band of scientific men like Huxley, Tyndall, and Clifford rallied round the Agnostic flag, and for a time carried all before them. In Germany the Agnostic epidemic raged fiercely, and its progress was furthered by the chaos which overtook Idealism after the death of Hegel. Weary of transcendental speculations, students of philosophy gave a ready ear to science, which, as transformed by Evolution, seemed able to give, on the lines of a revised version of experience, satisfactory answers to old problems. Where the problems were insoluble, the new school be-

lieved themselves able to give satisfactory and final reasons why they were insoluble. George Eliot was one of those who bowed before the teachers of the new gospel, and in her novels, as we saw in the previous chapter, she set herself to interpret life from the standpoint of Agnosticism. There were still a few thinkers in the realm of Art who refused to bow the knee to the scientific Baal. Among them was Robert Browning. Browning may be classed as an Idealist. But just as the Materialism of the Evolution period differed greatly from that of the Revolution period, so we find a marked difference between the Idealism of the time of Browning and that of Wordsworth and Coleridge, and the opponents of the French school generally. Writers of the old type of Idealism waged war with science, which, by putting everything under the microscope, and using the methods of the dissecting-room, seemed to rob religion of its sacredness and poetry of its charm.

The new Idealism, as represented by Browning, faced the facts of science squarely. It refused to believe that there was contradiction at the heart of things. Nay, more; Browning, as a

modern Idealist, grasped the truth that whatever enlarged our conceptions of the Universe and man was bound to be favourable to the deepening of the religious mood and the expansion of the poetic spirit. Such a result could only follow from an interpretation of the facts of science widely different from that of the Agnostic school. The peculiarity about Browning is that he seems to have started on his poetic career with a coherent system of thought. The poetic mind as such is peculiarly tremulous to the tendencies of its time. We have only to study the poems of Arthur Clough and Matthew Arnold to see how deeply affected these men were by the Agnostic blight which had fallen upon the higher thought of their day. Even Tennyson, though classed as an Idealist, did not pass through the fire of Agnosticism unscathed. Even in his most exultant moods he seems to shudder as he remembers his terrible struggles in the Slough of Despond. We find none of this in Browning. He appears to have crossed the Slough of Despond at a bound,—a valiant, cheery pilgrim, who will allow no obstacles to impede his progress to the



Celestial City. His earliest, like his latest ? poems, reveal the same unity of thought, fervour of belief, and tone of exultation. "Granted," he seems to say, "all that science advances about the origin of the Universe and the evolution of man, I find in these theories or facts nothing to shake my faith in the old spiritual interpretation of things." In harmony with the Idealistic philosophy, Browning refuses to believe that life and its mysteries can be understood except as viewed through mind. Begin with matter, and you cannot even understand mind, much less God, the unifying and inspiring principle of both. Agnosticism follows as the natural consequence of making matter the starting-point. Begin with mind and you pass beyond matter to the conception of an Infinite Mind of which Nature and man are but manifestations. In that case, between the Finite and the Infinite Mind there must be relationship, some point of contact. "God ! Thou art mind !" says Paracelsus. In another way Browning expresses it thus :

"God is soul, souls I and thou ; with souls should souls have place."

In such a view there is no room for the theory of the Unknowable—a theory which, by shutting man off from the source of things, makes religion impossible. The relationship between the Divine and the human leads Browning to declare that God “owns the Soul,” and it is only a step farther to belief in “God’s intercourse with the human kind”:

“God . . . dwells in all,  
From life’s minute beginnings, up at last  
To man—the consummation of this scheme  
Of being, the completion of this sphere of life.”

With Browning, God is no Superhuman Mechanic who has set the world spinning and stands outside watching it go. God is the life and animating Soul of the world. God has created the mind and heart of man as well as the world, and in these, with their marvellous powers of thought and equally marvellous powers of love, we learn more of Him than by exploration of the boundless realms of starry space:

“This is the glory—that in all conceived,  
Or felt, or known, I recognise a mind.  
Not mine, but like mine—for the double joy,  
Making all things for me, and me for Him.”

Such a conception of man’s relation to what

Emerson calls the Over-Soul naturally finds expression, not in stoical submission to an Unknown Force, but in awe-stricken worship :

“ Therefore to whom turn I, but to Thee, the ineffable Name ?  
 Builder and maker, Thou, of houses not made with hands !  
 What, have fear of change from Thee, who art ever the  
 same ?  
 Doubt that Thy power can fill the heart, that Thy power  
 expands ? ”

The one all-important question of philosophy and religion is this—How can man find God ? Pantheism with its view that Nature is God is no answer, because it abolishes all distinctions. It is a unity, but the unity of a landscape in a fog. Can we, by intellectual searching, find God ? Browning’s “ Paracelsus ” is clearly intended to show that man will not reach the unity of things by sheer force of intellect. Paracelsus, in his conscious wrestling with the Mystery of Existence, comes to the conclusion that “ mind is nothing but disease,” and too late discovers the truth which he had missed—the supreme worth of love. The emphasis which Browning places upon love as distinguished from knowledge, leads us to his conception of the real purpose of life. Browning has not the Hegelian

craze for encompassing the three great problems—God, Nature, and Man—with one all-embracing philosophic formula. Man's chief end, according to Browning, is not to think the Universe, but to be united by love to the soul of the Universe, and by the power of love to develop his nature on the lines of the Divine Idea. There is truth in the criticism that Browning, in giving too great subordination to intellect, leaves a serious gap in his philosophy, thereby bringing back the element of Agnosticism which it was his purpose to oppose. However, by emphasising the principle of love, the poet secures a starting-point for his view of man, not as a temporary incarnation of material energies, which in the course of time will be dissipated, and with it the disintegration of personality, but as a being placed on the earth in probation, to develop his God-implanted powers, with a view to an immortal destiny. What are the main factors in that development? Just those things which to the philosophic mind are the enigmas of life—evil, sorrow, suffering, untoward circumstances, and the thousand obstructions which stunt and thwart human life.

Carlyle's Idealism led him into violent antag-

onism to the Evolution theory as applied to man by Darwin and Spencer. Browning frankly accepted Evolution, and by interpreting it from the standpoint of Idealism, made it the basis of his ethical and religious system. Referring to the ape origin of man, Browning says :

“ I like the thought He should have lodged me once  
I’ the hole, the cave, the hut, the tenement,  
The mansion, and the palace : made me learn  
The feel o’ the first, before I found myself  
Loftier i’ the last.”

In the higher ethical life of man there goes on a struggle for existence as keen as in the animal world ; and just as in the latter the struggle results in increasing perfection, so in the former the road to perfection lies through stern battle with base desires, mean thoughts, ungenial surroundings. Browning, like Darwin, places all-important stress upon struggle, without which progress is impossible. Browning is delighted with the thought

“ that man is hurled  
From change to change unceasingly,  
His soul’s wings never furled.”

In the poet’s philosophy, what we call evil is



only relatively so. Evil is the power that goads man on to good. Evil, with Browning, has no real existence. We can fancy him agreeing with Emerson that evil is good in the making. It would be manifestly out of place here to discuss the tremendous problem of evil, but this much must be said: Browning not only throws no fresh light on the subject, but by his superficial handling of it tends to confuse moral distinctions. As Julius Müller, the German theologian, says: "If good seeks to produce or supplement itself by evil, it thereby ceases to be good. . . . What divine grace is still to bring out of evil, supposing it to be already present, and the Salvation which it is able to work out from a state of arbitrariness and perversion by overcoming evil, cannot certainly be inferred to be a necessity of evil." Browning is on securer ground when he deals with the motive force of ethical development. Knowledge, we are constantly told in these days, is power. Buckle wrote his 'History of Civilisation' to prove that progress is due to the intellect. Moral truths, said Buckle, are few, and ethical ideas stationary; to the increase of knowledge is due man's in-

creased command of Nature and her laws. Browning, on the other hand, places confidence in the marvellous power of love to lift humanity from the stifling plains of selfish ease to the ampler region of self-sacrifice. Thus in "Paracelsus" he says:

"God! Thou art Love! I build my faith on that."

By the aid of the principle of love Browning seeks to prove the community of nature in God and man:

"So the All-Great were the All-Loving, too,  
So through the thunder came a human voice  
Saying, 'O heart I made, a heart beats here!  
Face, my hands fashioned, see it in myself!  
Thou hast no power, nor mayst conceive of mine,  
But love I gave thee, with myself to love,  
And thou must love Me, who have died for thee.'"

And thus we reach the central thought of Browning, that man as an ethical and spiritual being develops in proportion as he, in response to the divine love, realises the divine will. Fearlessly accepting the truth of Darwin and Spencerism as regards the evolution of the world and man, Browning presses Evolution into the service of Idealism, and instead of bringing human progress to an end here like a

half-finished drama, prolongs it into the spiritual world, where the dim gropings and yearnings of man find explanation and satisfaction in adoring prostration before the All-Loving :

“ God is seen—God

In the dew, in the stone, in the flesh, in the soul, and the clod ;

And then looking within and around me, I ever renew  
(With that stoop of the soul which in bending upraises it too)  
The submission of man’s nothing-perfect to God’s all-complete,  
And by each new obeisance in spirit I climb to His feet.”

In treating of Browning’s view of life, Bishop Westcott very truly remarks upon the four distinctive notes of the poet’s teaching—the unity of life, the discipline of life, the continuity of life, the assurance of life. In the writings of George Eliot we found the creed of Positivism, with its worship of humanity, ending in nothing higher for man than an impersonal presence in the Choir Invisible. In Browning’s poems we have the creed of Idealism, not in the ethereal form of the German School, but clothed in the flesh and blood of Christian spirituality. Man’s highest blessedness is not, as with Hegel, by sheer power of thought to reach the Absolute, but rather the blessedness of the beatific vision :

"I shall behold Thee face to face,  
 O God, and in Thy light retrace,  
 How in all I loved here, still wast Thou !

. . . . .  
 What is that I hunger for but God ?  
 My God, my God, let me for once look on Thee,  
 As though nought else existed, we alone !"

In Browning, Idealism reaches its highest flight. Carlyle, Idealist though he was, never got beyond discontent and despondency. His mood was sombre, not to say dolorous. The "Immensities" and the "Eternities" so oppressed his thought, that man and his doings shrank into insignificance. Browning, on the other hand, viewed the Divine not as something outside of man and the world, but as their inspiration and explanation. Carlyle startled his generation out of their complacent materialism and conventional orthodoxy. Dissatisfied with the flesh-pots of Egypt, the men of his generation followed Carlyle, who led them into the wilderness, and, as Clough puts it, left them there. To Browning was given a Pisgah glimpse of the Promised Land. Inspired by the vision, he spoke to his fellow-pilgrims words of dauntless courage and exultant hope. As Professor Jones

remarks, so thorough was Browning's "conviction of the sincere purpose of life, of the certainty of the good towards which man is moving, and of the beneficence of the power which is at work everywhere in the world, that many of his poems ring like the triumphant songs of Luther."



## CHAPTER XVIII.

## TENNYSON AND MODERN THOUGHT.

IF one of the tasks of the poet is to reflect by means of his art the tendencies, aspirations, contradictions, and speculations of his age, by no poet has the task been more faithfully and worthily discharged than by Alfred Tennyson. In certain things, as already remarked, Tennyson was surpassed by Browning, who at the start of his career provided himself with a set of first principles, by which he was able to meet joyously some of the deepest problems of his time. In so far as the poet aspires to be the teacher of his age, the tone of joyous confidence has many advantages; but in so far as he aspires to be an artist, the note of dogmatic authority lessens his influence over those minds which do not share his point of view. Now, it is the special merit of Tennyson that while he has a distinctive message to his age, he does not, like Browning,

present it in dogmatic form in a framework of optimism, but rather reveals to the reader the various intellectual and spiritual struggles through which his soul passed in its pilgrimage from doubt to certainty. It is this which makes Tennyson emphatically the poet of his age, which has been described as destitute of faith but terrified at scepticism. Browning suffered no mental disturbance—at least his poetry reveals none—from the new view of Nature and man which Evolution had brought. Browning quietly pressed Evolution into the service of Idealism. With Tennyson the reconciliation between the Evolution theory and the old philosophical and religious view of life was accomplished through great intellectual and spiritual tribulation. His poems reveal a state of mind not unlike that which we find delineated in Carlyle's 'Sartor Resartus,' in the chapter entitled "The Everlasting No." For a time it seemed as if Science with its new and startling views of Nature and man not only threw discredit on the Bible as the medium of a supernatural revelation, but also in the form of a materialistic philosophy gave the death-blow to the idea of God. Two sections of the Church of England strove hard

to stem the tide of Materialism. The Tractarians saw in the increasing scepticism evidence of the untrustworthiness of Reason when applied to things supernatural, and invoked the aid of Faith as embodied in an infallible Church. The Broad Church party endeavoured to meet the enemy by way of compromise. Repudiating at once an infallible Church and an infallible Book, they sought to find in history and the nature of man justification for Christianity, which, in their view, was a life rather than a system of dogmas. Tennyson's love of the past and craving for certainty might have led him to the Tractarian fold, but for the strong influence which Maurice had over his mind and heart; but Broad-Churchism failed to dispel the doubts and speculations with which Tennyson's mind was beset. Thus in one of his early poems, "Supposed Confessions of a Second-rate Sensitive Mind," we find the poet pathetically bewailing the loss of the blessed tranquillity of infancy when he knelt in prayer at his mother's knee. He finds himself "moved from beneath with doubt and fear":

"O weary life! O weary death!  
O spirit and heart made desolate!  
O damned vacillating state!"

The pathetic wrestling with doubt and passionate yearning for certainty finds expression in "The Two Voices," which in many points resembles the soul-stirring chapters of 'Sartor Resartus.' Carlyle, it will be remembered, finds peace when he recognises that the Universe is not a huge machine, but the temple of Deity. So, too, with Tennyson comes recognition of the truth, which lifts him out of the materialist Slough of Despond :

" At last I heard a voice upon the slope  
 Cry to the summit ' Is there any hope ? '  
 To which an answer peal'd from that high land,  
 But in a tongue no man could understand ;  
 And in the glimmering limit far withdrawn  
 God made Himself an awful rose of dawn."

Is this a God-created or a Godless world? Science, with its matter and motion, its struggle for existence, and its cheerless future for man, seemed to say that the world was Godless. Tennyson appealed from the world to the soul; from the outer to the inner :

" I found Him not in World or Sun, 7  
 Or eagle's wing, or insect's eye ;  
 Nor thro' the questions men may try,  
 The petty cobwebs we have spun : f

If e'er when faith had fall'n asleep,  
 I heard a voice 'believe no more,'  
 And heard an ever-breaking shore  
 That tumbled in the Godless deep ;

A warmth within the breast would melt  
 The freezing reason's colder part,  
 And like a man in wrath, the heart  
 Stood up and answer'd 'I have felt.'

No, like a child in doubt and fear :  
 But that blind clamour made me wise ;  
 Then was I as a child that cries,  
 But, crying, knows his father near ;

And what I am beheld again,  
 What is, and no man understands ;  
 And out of darkness came the hands }  
 That reach thro' nature, moulding men."

This, it must be confessed, is a somewhat nebulous faith, quite incapable of sustaining the shock of the sceptical intellect. A more robust faith in the divine meaning of life is necessary if man is to work out his high destiny. In one of the poems of his old age, Tennyson shows how heavily the new views of the Universe which science reveals tend to pessimism when divorced from belief in a great overruling Purpose :

"What is it all but a trouble of ants in the gleam of a million  
 million of suns ?

. . . . .



Swallow'd in vastness, lost in silence, drown'd in the depths of  
a meaningless past.

What but a murmur of gnats in the gloom, or a moment's anger  
of bees in their hive?"

Tennyson could not accept such a pessimistic creed. Science he would not allow to overwhelm the natural movement of the soul toward the thought of God, which alone gives unity and purpose to life. In his "In Memoriam" the poet, in exquisite language, gives expression to the groping of the soul after the Eternal:

"I falter where I firmly trod,  
And falling with my weight of cares  
Upon the great world's altar-stairs  
That slope thro' darkness up to God,

I stretch lame hands of faith, and grope,  
And gather dust and chaff, and call  
To what I feel is Lord of all,  
And faintly trust the larger hope."

Tennyson meets the materialistic teachings of science with the passionate protest of the heart; but emotionalism, however intense, cannot permanently silence the questionings of the intellect. That the poet found no certainty in the religious intuitionism of "In Memoriam" is plain from his life-long speculations on the mystery of being. There is no evidence that Tennyson

worried himself with the abstract philosophies of the schools, but there is abundant evidence that by a method of his own he reached a philosophic position not unlike that of Kant, with his doctrines of the Relativity of Knowledge and the Moral Imperative. According to Kant, we are compelled to think Existence under the categories of Space and Time, but these need have no reference to the Absolute, which is beyond our conceptions :

“ The days and hours are ever glancing by,  
And seem to flicker past through sun and shade,  
Or short, or long, as Pleasure leads, or Pain :  
But with the Nameless is nor Day nor Hour,  
Though we, thin words, who creep from thought to thought,  
Break into ‘ Thens ’ and ‘ Whens ’ the Eternal Now  
This double seeming of the single word.”

But if only relative knowledge is permitted to man, we have in the idea of Duty an avenue of communication to the Absolute :

“ Curb the beast would cast thee in the mire,  
And leave the hot swamp of voluptuousness,  
A cloud between the Nameless and thyself,  
And lay thine uphill shoulder to the wheel,  
And climb the Mount of Blessing, whence, if thou  
Look higher, then—perchance—thou mayest—beyond  
A hundred ever-rising mountain lines  
And past the range of Night and Shadow—see  
The high-heaven dawn of more than mortal day  
Strike on the Mount of Vision.”

Duty, with its imperative tones, according to Kant, points to a scene beyond the present; but Tennyson goes beyond this, and strengthens the case for Immortality by calling in the aid of Faith based upon the analogies of earthly life:

“Cling to Faith beyond the forms of Faith!  
 She sees the Best that glimmers through the Worst,  
 She feels the Sun is hid but for a night,  
 She spies the summer through the winter bud,  
 She tastes the fruit before the blossom falls,  
 She hears the lark within the songless egg,  
 She finds the fountain where they wail'd Mirage!”

What is the ethical as distinguished from the intellectual relations between the Divine and the human? Browning, as we saw, held that the connecting link is love. With Browning love to God seems natural to man, who is credited with more power of initiative in things spiritual than experience warrants. Tennyson makes no such mistake. Truer to human nature than Browning, he recognises the tragic contrast between man's aspirations and his spiritual weakness. Tennyson feels that man's elevation is beyond his own strength. With something of the awe-struck

humility of the Hebrews, Tennyson prostrates himself before the Divine whose help is needed ere he can even make a start in the higher life. Not in his own feeble love does he trust, but in the love and strength of the strong Son of God, immortal Love :

“Thou wilt not leave us in the dust :  
Thou madest man, he knows not why,  
He thinks he was not made to die ;  
And Thou hast made him : Thou art just.

Thou seemest human and divine,  
The highest, holiest manhood, Thou :  
Our wills are ours, we know not how ;  
Our wills are ours, to make them Thine.”

“In Memoriam” may be described as a record of a modern pilgrim’s progress from doubt to certainty, from sceptical questionings to faith. In that poem we have delineated the various moods of the modern mind in presence of the new problems which philosophy and science have introduced into the world—the insignificance of man when contrasted with the infinity of the Universe, the seeming indifference of Nature to the creatures to which it has given birth, and the apparent futility of man’s little life. Tennyson manfully wrestles with all the

problems, and though his faith sometimes wavers, he never loses hold of the Eternal, till at last in his old age he breaks into a hymn of adoration to the Absolute :

“ Hallowed be Thy name—Halleluiah !—

Infinite Ideality !

Immeasurable Reality !

Infinite Personality !

Hallowed be Thy name—Halleluiah !

We feel we are nothing—for all is Thou and in Thee ;

We feel we are something—*that* also has come from Thee ;

We feel we are nothing—but Thou wilt help us to be.

Hallowed be Thy name—Halleluiah !”

And thus Tennyson reaches the haven of spiritual rest. He has not reached it by science or philosophy. He has reached it by following the intuitions of the soul—what in one of his most beautiful poems he calls “The Gleam” :

“ O young Mariner,  
You from the haven  
Under the sea-cliff,  
You that are watching  
The gray Magician  
With eyes of wonder,  
*I* am Merlin  
And *I* am dying,  
*I* am Merlin  
Who follow The Gleam.  
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And so to the land's  
Last limit I came—  
And can no longer,  
But die rejoicing,  
For thro' the Magic  
Of Him the Mighty,  
Who taught me in childhood,  
There on the border  
Of boundless Ocean,  
And all but in Heaven  
Hovers The Gleam.

Not of the sunlight,  
Not of the moonlight,  
Not of the starlight !  
O young Mariner,  
Down to the haven,  
Call your companions,  
Launch your vessel,  
And crowd your canvas,  
And, ere it vanishes  
Over the margin,  
After it, follow it,  
Follow The Gleam."

And so Tennyson, after much tribulation, fights his way from unbelief to doubt, and from doubt to faith, at every stage reflecting in his poems the thoughts and aspirations of his age. His faith now stood firm. In his old age on the verge of the grave he could look hopefully to the future :

"Twilight and evening bell,  
 And after that the dark !  
 And may there be no sadness of farewell  
 When I embark ;

For tho' from out our bourne of Time and Place  
 The flood may bear me far,  
 I hope to see my Pilot face to face  
 When I have crost the bar."

At the flowing river nothing remains but  
 memories of Giant Despair, Doubting Castle,  
 and the Valley of Humiliation. Beyond the  
 river are there not the Shining Ones to lead  
 the weary earth-stained pilgrim to the Palace  
 of the King ?

## CHAPTER XIX.

THE EVOLUTION OF RELIGIOUS THOUGHT :  
EVANGELICALISM.

UPON no phase of the higher life of the Nineteenth Century had the French Revolution greater influence than upon religious thought. During the Eighteenth Century the religious life of England and Scotland was greatly affected by the Deistical movement, whose influence, however, was suddenly checked by the Revolution. Deism in this country grew out of the reaction against the rigorous Calvinism of the Seventeenth Century. In 'Adam Smith' in the "Famous Scots" series the present writer contrasts the two systems of religious thought which struggled for mastery in the Eighteenth Century: "In opposition to Calvinism with its doctrine of election, the theological rationalism of the Hutcheson school postulated the existence of a God whose

ruling desire was the happiness of all His creatures. In opposition to Calvinism with its doctrine of human depravity, the Hutcheson school represented man as supplied with two monitors, conscience and reason: by means of the one, actions were classified as right and wrong; and by means of the other, knowledge was gained of Nature and her laws. Following from this was the belief that the harmony of interests which a beneficent Nature sought to promote could best be reached by individuals respecting one another's rights: enlightened self-interest would lead to social harmony. Natural liberty thus became the watchword of the theological rationalists, as opposed to the supernatural paternalism of the Calvinists." For a time it seemed as if, under the guidance of the Hutcheson school, the Church was to become the leader of the national mind along the path of intellectual progress.

To all appearance, the Eighteenth Century in Scotland was the beginning of the Age of Reason. It seemed as if the Seventeenth Century, with its theocratic ideals, its intolerance, its gloom, its fanaticism, had been for ever left behind.

With the Moderates, the men of reason, of good-breeding, Deism, with its free, joyous worship of Nature, was rapidly taking the place of Calvinism, with its soul-torturings and its asceticism. From the study of the old Calvinistic divines students turned to the classical authors, and in the poetry of the time they breathed quite a pagan atmosphere. It seemed as if the Scottish mind, after its long repression, was determined to revel in all kinds of secular freedom. Hutcheson and his school headed the revolt against the theological conception of human nature. Hume aided in this direction, but his influence really began to be felt in the next century. Adam Smith headed the revolt against the theological conception of society, with its supernatural theory of industry and prosperity; and Burns headed the revolt against the claims of the Church to dominate both the individual and society. In Scotland, the Age of Reason to all appearance had been ushered in.

The dawn of the new day was soon overclouded by the French Revolution. How great was the reaction caused by that upheaval is illustrated by a remark made by George Combe,



who, when in America, was asked to account for the great change which had taken place in the Scottish clergy since the days of Robertson and Blair. "The only account of it," says Combe, "which I could give was one which I had received from an aged friend who was long an elder in one of the churches in Edinburgh, and who himself had witnessed the change. 'Before the breaking-out of the French Revolution,' said he, 'the Scottish clergy were distinguished for the liberality of their religious sentiments, and public rumour mentioned the intention of their leaders to propose a revisal of the standards of the Church. The men of property, the lawyers and distinguished physicians in general, partook of the same spirit, and the people would have followed in their train without much hesitation. In this state of the public mind the French Revolution broke out, the Throne and the Altar were overturned in France and trampled under foot. The Government and the owners of property in Great Britain became alarmed at the progress of French principles among their own people, and combined to resist them. Their great object

was to rear bulwarks around the Throne, for the protection, through it, of their private interests, and, viewing the Altar as the principal pillar of State, they became zealous supporters of religious institutions and observances. 'I then saw,' said the elder, 'individuals of great political influence, who for many years before had never entered a church door, ostentatiously walking up and down the High Street of Edinburgh with their Bibles in their hands, to attend public worship. Their efforts were successful. A vast zeal was instantaneously evoked and put in action, and serious impressions were communicated to the young.'"

In England, as in Scotland, the reaction against the French Revolution gave the Evangelical party the ascendancy. In face of what was considered the eruption of diabolism in France, the religion of Reason seemed a mockery: talk about a social order, working under the guidance of Reason, freed from the tyranny of Kings and Priests, seemed grotesque. The French Revolution put an end to the Age of Reason. As Froude remarks: "Orthodoxy once more became fashionable. In certain circles of society scepti-

cism had for a time been fashionable; but the number of professed unbelievers was never great, and infidelity was always a reproach. The Church administration had been slovenly; but in the masses of the people the convictions which they inherited were still present, and were blown into flame easily by the Methodist revival. The Establishment followed the example and grew energetic again. The French Revolution had frightened all classes out of advanced ways of thinking, and society in town and country was Tory in politics, and determined to allow no innovations upon the inherited faith."

One effect of the French Revolution was to give the Evangelical school the leadership in the religious reaction. The naturalness of this is obvious. In an age when revolutionary unbelief had shaken society to its foundations, it was obvious that the minds of men would turn to that system of religion which in unmistakable tones struck the note of certainty. What could be more certain than the declaration of the Evangelical school that the Bible was the infallible word of God? In the midst of the surging waves of human passion and speculation, here surely was

the Rock of Ages. In addition, the Evangelical school had the great merit of being able to oppose to the life-system of the Revolution school an equally comprehensive life-system. The one rested on Naturalism, the other on Supernaturalism. Start with the Revolution thinkers with the natural goodness of man, and the tracing of evil individual and social to bad governments — ecclesiastical and political — and the inevitable outcome was a revolutionary attempt to construct society on a new basis. On the other hand, start with the natural depravity of man as pictured in the Bible, and it was clear that a supernatural remedy was an absolute necessity. Evangelicalism was something more than a mere religious creed; it was a comprehensive and coherent theory of man—a theory which seemed to find complete verification in history. What more plausible than the Biblical account of the fall of mankind in the person of their federal head, Adam? How else could the dreadful record of sin and misery which history gives us be explained except by some dire catastrophe at the beginning of human history? As a set-off to the disobedience of the federal head

of the human race there was the obedience of the Second Adam, the new federal head. From the earliest times there were hints of a Saviour who was to undo the work of Adam; and as a preliminary to this, we have the selection of a race who, under special divine training, were to be made the custodians of the heavenly blessing till the appointed time when the Second Adam, victorious over evil, would lead humanity out of the Egyptian slavery to sin into the Promised Land of holiness.

How logically and naturally the whole scheme of Evangelicalism hangs is seen in Jonathan Edwards's 'History of Redemption,' which is not only a history of supernatural deliverance from evil, but is also a history of civilisation. Judaism and Christianity are seen to be parts of a great scheme of supernatural evolution, the key to which is given by the Apostle Paul. Man had incurred the wrath of God, whose righteousness made it imperative that sin should be punished. In order to keep alive the sense of the heinousness of sin, the sacrificial system was adopted, — a system which, in addition to its immediate pur-



pose, pointed to the atonement to be afterwards affected by the Second Person in the Trinity, who humbled Himself to the shameful death of the Cross as a vicarious sacrifice for the sins of humanity. But in the creed of Evangelicalism provision was made not only for the pardon of the sinner through the mediation of his Representative, the Second Adam, but also for his regeneration by the Holy Spirit. The sinner, through faith in his Representative, was not only justified and adopted into the family of God, but received the germs of a new nature in harmony with his high destiny. In his heart began the process of sanctification by which he died more and more unto sin and lived more and more unto righteousness.

Here was a creed which, stirred into activity by what seemed to be the diabolism of the French Revolution, was especially fitted to influence earnest souls. Was not the Revolution itself dramatic evidence of the depravity of man, and of the utter hopelessness of any remedy, short of supernaturalism, for the calamities under which humanity suffered? Another factor greatly aided the spread

of Evangelicalism in the early nineteenth century. The masses had never been charmed by the gospel of Reason. The Deism of the philosophers had nothing for them ; and when by the rise and concentration of industries, caused by what may be called the Industrial Revolution, the people were massed together in towns, they became so much inflammable material for Methodist preachers, who proclaimed the good news with a power unknown in the conventional pulpits of the land. Moreover, Evangelicalism was foremost in all work of social reform. Its representatives took the lead in the crusade against slavery. The Evangelical school, however, had one fatal defect—it had more heat than light. In his ‘History of Christian Doctrine’ Professor Fisher very pertinently says: “Of this school, great as was the service rendered to the cause of practical religion by it, little is to be said in a history of theology. It formed the strength of the Low Church party which was prevalent in the early decades of the nineteenth century. Its leaders cherished Calvinistic opinions. It was one of their defects that so little was done by them to throw light upon the reasonableness of

the doctrines which were inculcated with so much faith and fervour."

In addition to this, the Evangelical party, both in England and Scotland, probably as a reaction against the Moderate section, looked coldly upon literature and all secular movements which lay outside of purely religious feeling. In Scotland this was intensified by the Disruption, which brought to a crisis the long feud between the Moderates and the Evangelicals. The latter indeed prided themselves on their concentration upon matters spiritual to the neglect of literature, and all interests which did not immediately bear upon the great theme of Redemption.

The assumption of Evangelicalism that the sole use of the Bible was to proclaim the way of life to perishing individual sinners, to be a kind of spiritual chart from the City of Destruction to the Celestial City, and the conception of the world as a Vanity Fair whose allurements were to be resisted, fatally checked the expansion of the mind in the direction of philosophy, science, and literature. In truth, Evangelicalism in this respect compares unfavourably with Puritanism,

which aimed at a reproduction in modern life of the old theocratic ideal under which the whole sphere of human activity, secular as well as sacred, was to be brought within the reign of God. In losing sight of the social side of Christianity, Evangelicalism tended to a narrow individualism which, when the stage of fervour was passed, took the form of the somewhat dreary and repellent form of Dissent which we find pictured in the books of Mark Rutherford, and against which Matthew Arnold directed his shafts of mockery and ridicule. This estimate of the Evangelical movement agrees with the description of it given by no less an authority than the late Dr Dale. Writing of Evangelicalism he says: "Although its leaders insisted very earnestly on the obligation of the individual Christian to live a devout and godly life, they had very little to say about the relations of the individual Christian to the general order of human society, or about the realisation of the Kingdom of God in all the various regions of human activity. . . . It had no such dreams as came to an ancient Jewish saint of the glory of Christ as the true

Lord of the human race, the King who will listen to the cry of the oppressed and break in pieces the oppressor. It had no eagerness to take possession of the realms of Art, Science, Literature, Politics, Commerce, Industry, in the name of their true Sovereign and Prince. Hence its ethical ideal of the individual Christian was wanting in wealth and variety."

In their faith and fervour the Evangelicals overlooked the important fact that no great religious movement can afford to disparage the claims of the intellect. The campaign of unbelief, which had been suspended for a time in consequence of the odium caused by the Revolution, was resumed with redoubled force, aided as it was by the new arguments which had been supplied by science and historical criticism. In brief, Evangelicalism failed to meet the needs of the new time. Its sharp division between the sacred and the secular, its excessive subjectivity, and its lack of the historic spirit, paved the way for the Tractarian movement, whose ideal at least was catholic rather than sectarian. The inability of Evangelicalism, on the basis of its doctrine of bib-



lical infallibility, to meet the attacks of unbelief, led to the rise of the Broad Church movement, which was an attempt to make room for the new Knowledge, while, at the same time, conserving the fundamental elements in Christianity.

## CHAPTER XX.

## THE BROAD CHURCH MOVEMENT.

THE intense subjectivity of Evangelicalism, and its deficiency of the historical sense, had much to do with the rise of what has been called Tractarianism. The divorce between the secular and the sacred sides of life had the effect of concentrating religion upon personal salvation, with the result that the sphere of public life was given over to secular reformers. Men like Newman thought they saw in the Liberal legislation of the time the rise of a spirit which, unless checked, would prove fatal to national religion. Newman, in combating Erastianism, had at first no desire to coquet with Romanism. He thought the evils which he saw around him would be checked by emphasising aspects of truth which the Evangelicals had overlooked. They viewed the Church purely in relation to the sal-

vation of the individual. Newman viewed it as a divine Institute, a supernatural economy for the training of man and society, as the channel through which divine grace flowed to the human race. The more firmly this idea took hold of Newman, the more necessary it seemed to him that the Church should have the notes of unity and catholicity. He strove hard to find those notes in the Anglican Church, but in the end he was driven to the conclusion that only in the Church of Rome could his ideals be realised.

The Tractarian movement did nothing for the direct intellectual development of the nineteenth century. Its influence was mainly ecclesiastical and religious. It is mentioned here because of the place which it occupied in the reactionary movement against Evangelicalism. Dr Martineau, in one of his essays, has admirably summed up the influence of the movement: "A sense of the universality and perpetuity of divine grace, of the sanctity of common duties and self-denials, of the grandeur and power of historical communion and church life, of the true place of beauty and art worship, has deeply penetrated into the newer religion of England. For the re-

union of religious and moral ends, for the reconciliation of human admiration with holy reverence, for the consecration of the near and temporal,—many a heart owes a debt of unspeakable gratitude to the literature of the Oxford school.”

The real intellectual reaction against Evangelicalism is to be found in the Broad Church movement. In presence of the problems raised by science, Evangelicalism found it increasingly difficult to steady itself on its old dogma of the infallibility of the Bible. How, in the face of the new theories of the Universe and of the early history of mankind, could the record of Genesis be accepted in its literal sense? Clearly, if the supernatural element in the Bible was to be preserved, something would have to be done to evade the difficulties raised by science. Coleridge pointed the way by his theory that the Bible contained the word of God, but that all in the Bible was not the word of God. Importing into theology the theory of Intuition which he found in German philosophy, Coleridge shifted the basis of biblical certainty from the external to the internal. Thus, in his ‘Confessions of an Inquiring Spirit,’ he declares that in the Bible, “whatever finds me

bears witness for itself that it proceeds from a Holy Spirit."

The method of Coleridge seemed admirably calculated to get rid of the difficulties which were inherent in the old view of an infallible book. All the more plausible did it seem when the pioneers of the Broad Church movement were able to retain the fundamental doctrines of Christianity. Dr Arnold, Maurice, and the authors of the famous 'Essays and Reviews,' had no intention of parting with the essentials of Evangelical theology: all they meant was to separate the religious element from what they believed to be the unhistorical and unscientific elements of the Bible. It was plain, however, that the Broad Church movement would have a disturbing effect on the whole system of Evangelical thought. Tamper with the early history of man as recorded in Genesis, and the whole Redemptive scheme is endangered. If mankind did not fall in Adam, in what sense could they rise in Christ? In the Evangelical system the two things hang together, as Paul shows clearly in his epistle to the Romans. The effect at first of the Broad Church movement was to



shift the emphasis on the Evangelical doctrines. With the Evangelicals the Atonement was the central truth, the pivot on which the Redemptive scheme turned. But the Broad Church party, finding no historical basis for the fall of Adam, were driven to water down the Evangelical doctrine of original sin till it lost its old, outstanding, far-reaching importance which made the Atonement an absolute necessity. In their view the cardinal doctrine was not the Atonement but the Incarnation. What was the motive of the Incarnation? According to Maurice, Christ came not as the second Adam to stand in the place of man and suffer as the sinner's substitute, as the Evangelicals would say: He came as the "sinless root of humanity," and also "satisfied the Father by presenting the image of His own holiness and love." In short, according to Maurice, the kernel of the Atonement is the holy obedience, not the vicarious suffering, of Christ.

Having abandoned the federal theology which was rooted in the idea of Adam as the Covenant head of the human race, the Broad Church party had no recourse but to fall back upon the moral

theory of the Atonement — a theory which in America has had distinguished advocates like Bushnell, and in Scotland like Thomas Erskine, and, in modified form, Macleod Campbell. However plausible the moral theory is, it lacks the logical coherence of what has been called the forensic theory. No reader of the New Testament can fail to notice the stress which is placed upon the death of Christ. Paul is never weary of calling attention to the Cross as the central, vital, and culminating point in the Redemptive scheme. Did Christ suffer simply as a martyr? If death in its most shameful form came to Him in the course of His career of holy obedience as it might come to any good man who was ahead of his age, then a martyr He certainly was. It makes no difference that the martyr was more than human. In truth, it makes the problem all the more perplexing. If holy obedience was the main element in Christ's life, and the one of prime importance for the redemption of man, clearly the longer He lived to give the world the benefit of His example the better for humanity. Again, if Christ's death belongs to the category of martyrdom, why is it spoken of

in the Epistles as a Propitiation? Unless Paul meant that Christ as the second Adam was not merely a martyr to a divine ideal, but in some way the substitute of sinful humanity—unless this is meant, the language which he employs has no intelligible meaning.

In the Broad Church scheme the uniqueness of Christ and His mission is considerably impaired. If an offended Deity can be reconciled to man only by the appearance of a sinless Substitute, the divinity of Christ is at once necessary and intelligible. Nothing short of a divine substitute could stand forth as the representative of sinful humanity. The federal theology holds coherently together; not so the Broad Church theology. Eliminate the forensic element from the Redemptive scheme, and lay the sole stress on the moral element, and it is difficult to answer the Unitarians when they contend that Christ's example is shorn of efficacy when he is represented as one whose moral perfection was absolutely guaranteed by his divinity. A God in human form may perform a work on behalf of humanity after the style set forth by the Evangelical theology, and thereby set in

motion spiritual forces which will work for the moral elevation of the race; but if all that is needed for man's salvation is the appearance of a life which will be at once an ideal and an inspiration, clearly the more closely that life conforms to ordinary human conditions the greater will be its hold upon mankind.

Having lifted the Atonement out of the forensic into the moral sphere, the Broad Church party were driven to place the Incarnation in the forefront of their creed, but the time was sure to come when that dogma, too, would be subjected to analysis, and declared to be rather a hindrance than a help to Christian thought. Coleridge and his followers, on the strength of their internal test of spiritual truth, grounded their theology on the doctrine of the Incarnation. Dr Martineau and his school, also applying the internal test, and supported as they believed by historical criticism, dispensed with the doctrine of the Incarnation, to which they gave a universal instead of an individual interpretation. "The Incarnation," says Martineau, "is true, not of Christ exclusively, but of man universally and God everlastingly. He bends into the

human to dwell there, and humanity is the susceptible organ of the divine. . . . Of this grand and universal truth Christ became the revealer, not by being an exceptional personage (who could be a rule for nothing), but by being a signal instance of it, so intense and impressive as to set fire to every veil that would longer hide it." And thus Broad-Churchism, in its attempt to liberalise and rationalise the Evangelical theology on the basis of spiritual intuition, ends in Unitarianism.

When Coleridge made the basis of religious certainty to consist in the congruity of the doctrines of the Bible with the individual's sense of the fitness of spiritual things, he started a method of scriptural interpretation which ultimately reduced the supernatural element in the Bible to a minimum. How is the plain man to decide what is the word of God in the Bible?—how is he to separate the chaff from the wheat? Whatever finds one in the Bible, said Coleridge, bears the stamp of truth. This is a purely subjective standard of authority. What finds one may not find another, and thus we are plunged into intellectual and religious anarchy. Maurice,



in applying the test of Coleridge, elaborated a system of theology which bears the impress of his own individuality,—a system which has not laid hold of the religious world except in a vague and fragmentary fashion. The Coleridge test, when applied by less orthodox thinkers than Maurice, led to strange results. It led Francis Newman, J. A. Froude, and Matthew Arnold to the rejection of Supernaturalism altogether, and in the case of Dr Martineau it led to a form of Unitarianism which was strangely akin to Deism.

But the factor which affected the religious thought of the nineteenth century most powerfully was that known as the Higher Criticism. From Germany came the new ideas which were to shake the religious world to its foundations. When the Bible was accepted as an infallible record of actual facts, a message through reliable sources of a divine purpose, the work of theology was comparatively simple. The duty of the theologian was to classify and arrange in logical order revealed truths. With the Higher Criticism all this was changed. The religious world was astounded to learn that not

only was the Old Testament not infallible, but that it was largely unhistorical. They were alarmed to discover that the Pentateuch was not written by Moses, but was really a product of the Exile period,—a compilation by ecclesiastics, who wove the story of the wilderness journey and its miraculous incidents into a legendary framework in order to give supernatural sanction to the priestly *régime*. The minds of religious people were thrown into confusion. In their view, if the narrative of the Fall is dismissed to the realm of mythology, the whole fabric of Protestant theology falls to the ground. Take away the first Adam and the Fall, and the reasonings of Paul about the second Adam became meaningless. If the story of the wilderness journey, and the Divine injunctions about sacrifices in the Pentateuch, are traceable to the imaginative editing of ecclesiastics of the Exile, what becomes of the parallel in the Epistle to the Hebrews between the Mosaic sacrifices and Christ the great Sacrifice? To the religious mind it seemed as if the Higher Criticism was scarcely distinguishable from Rationalism. Here, surely, was confusion

worse confounded. Up till the appearance of the Higher Criticism the battle between belief and unbelief was all fair and above-board. On the one side stood defenders of revealed religion, and on the other side its opponents. Even thinkers like Maurice, though not claiming infallibility for the Bible, never dreamed of casting doubt upon its historicity; in fact, Maurice was one of the strongest opponents of Bishop Colenso when he broached his revolutionary opinions about the Pentateuch. But now, with the conclusions of unbelief accepted by believers, the issues had become inextricably mixed.

There can be no doubt that the liberalising efforts of the Broad Church party were largely inspired by their dislike of what was termed the harsh and forbidding Calvinism of the Evangelical school. Calvinism laid stress upon the sovereignty of God; Broad-Churchism, by way of reaction, emphasised the fatherhood of God. Calvinism, with its deep sense of the awfulness of sin, dwelt strongly upon retribution; Broad-Churchism, with perhaps greater sympathy for the sinner, dwelt strongly upon restoration. The strange fact falls to be recorded that the evolution theory, as ex-

pounded by the Spencerian and Darwinian schools, harmonises more with the Evangelical conceptions of God and man than with the Broad Church conceptions. The old theologians, in the guise of the Calvinistic system, grappled with the problems which occupy the minds of the Hegels, the Spencers, and the Darwins of to-day. Nay more, the conception of the Universe reached by those old Calvinists was in substance not far removed from that reached by modern German and British philosophers. The last word of philosophy, German and British, is determinism. Hegel in the hands of Mr Bradley, a brilliant Oxford thinker, makes short work of what is understood as free-will; and thinkers of the scientific school of Huxley are favourable to the view that man is an automaton. Now what is philosophical and scientific determinism but Calvinistic foreordination in a new dress? The only difference is, that modern philosophers and scientists attribute to Nature a universal necessity which has deprived man of freedom, while the Calvinists interpreted the necessity of Nature as an ordination of God. Modern philosophy and science are Calvinistic. Another standing complaint of the Broad Church against the

Calvinists of the old school is, that they took a gloomy view of man and his destiny,—that their doctrine of Election grates upon man's feelings of justice and equality of treatment. Now what is the new scientific doctrine of heredity but our old friend Election in a new dress? Men of science tell us that the present and future of the individual are the outcome of influences which operated before he was born, and of an environment which he did not create. The difference between the scientific and Calvinistic doctrines is, that one is called Natural Selection, and the other Supernatural Election. In regard to the ultimate nature of the Universe, those old Calvinists reached a view which is being endorsed by the latest philosophic and scientific interpreters. Science brings us down to atoms. Philosophy cannot rest in the atomic conception of the Cosmos. It reduces the atoms to centres of force and energy. Thus we come to the view that matter is but the phenomenal appearance of an Infinite Energy which, though unseen, is the real basis of matter, the source of life, the inspirer of law and order. Spencer's Infinite Energy, what is it but the Calvinist essence of God, which is everywhere, directly and immedi-



ately energetic? Hegel and Spencer can go no further in their researches and definitions than the words of the Shorter Catechism : " God is a Spirit, Infinite, Eternal, and Unchangeable." Many and great were the faults of our Calvinistic forefathers ; but they were something more than fanatics. While their hearts were burning against oppression, in their silent moments, in their enforced solitude, those grim uncouth men were grappling with the great mysteries of life, with an intellectual strength and philosophic breadth which we fail to find among the Broad Church leaders whose attitude towards them was one of patronising superiority.

In the midst of the prevailing theological confusion, the fact remains that to-day the religious sentiment is stronger than ever. It has survived the attacks of a materialistic philosophy, and it has also survived the attempt of Comte to find an outlet for it in the worship of Humanity. Theologies and philosophies rise and decay, but the religious sentiment is indestructible. As Spencer remarks : " However dominant may become the moral sentiment enlisted on behalf of humanity, it can never exclude the sentiment, alone properly

called religious, awakened by that which is behind humanity and behind all other things. The child, by wrapping its head in the bedclothes, may for a moment suppress the consciousness of surrounding darkness, but the consciousness, though rendered less vivid, survives, and imagination persists in occupying itself with that which lies beyond perception. No such thing as a 'Religion of Humanity' can ever do more than temporarily shut out the thought of a Power of which humanity is but a small and fugitive product,—a Power which was in the course of ever-changing manifestations before humanity was, and will continue through other manifestations when humanity has ceased to be."

## CHAPTER XXI.

## LATER PHASES OF RELIGIOUS THOUGHT.

THE history of thought during the nineteenth century affords ample illustration of what Spencer terms the indestructibility of the religious sentiment. The anti-religious campaign of the French Revolution thinkers for a time was detrimental to religion, but only for a time. The force of the attack produced a reaction in favour of religion till, as we have seen in previous chapters, the religious sentiment as embodied in definite creeds and institutions early in the nineteenth century regained more than its former vigour. About the middle of the century religion was exposed to another attack of a more formidable nature than that of the Revolution school. The Higher Critics had undermined the outworks of Protestant theology by their investigations into the Old Testament,

but the speculations associated with the school of Darwin threatened the very foundations of the faith.

The Darwinian theory of the origin of man was a direct challenge to theology. The special creation theory, the fall, the origin of evil, an overruling Providence,—these seemed incompatible with the evolution of man from lower forms of life, the survival of the fittest through natural selection, and the explanation of evil on natural principles. These, taken along with scientific discoveries regarding the age and history of the earth which conflicted with the biblical record, gave to theological conceptions a blow which seemed to prove fatal. The result was a revival of materialistic thought of a kind more formidable than that of Holbach and the Encyclopedists. Their materialism was mainly speculative; the new materialism was fortified by scientific research. Given matter endowed with certain potencies, and the idea of a presiding Deity could be dispensed with. Germany, wearied of Idealism, took kindly to scientific materialism. Thinkers like Strauss, Buchner, and Haeckel became enthusiastic advocates of the new theory of

materialistic evolution. In this country Huxley, Tyndall, and Clifford represented a school the members of which applied the theory in the interpretation of philosophy and religion. Huxley particularly, by the aid of the philosophy of Hume and Hamilton, sought to give to Darwinism a metaphysical foundation, and though he did not deny from a religious point of view the existence of a Creator, he sheltered himself and his school from the reproach of atheism by inventing the term Agnosticism. Spencer's book, 'First Principles,' by the prominence which it gave to matter in the interpretation of the Cosmos, powerfully aided the cult of materialism.

Having deposed a universal mind, the next step was to get rid of the uniqueness of the particular mind as associated with man. If the Cosmos could be explained on a materialistic basis as the evolution of matter by virtue of inherent forces and laws, what need was there for a spiritual principle in man? Psychology set itself to define mind as a product of matter in its highest state of complexity. Spencer was too great a thinker to endorse this theory, but it must be confessed that his treatment of mind in his



'Principles of Psychology' is ambiguous enough to give colour to the view that his sympathies lay with the materialist school. With man in the grip of material necessity, with no spiritual principle discernible in the Cosmos which seemed self-sustaining and self-evolving, what room could there be for the religious sentiment? The religious sentiment was an illusion whose evolution could be traced through history; and those who refused to go this length agreed with Huxley that the function of the religious sentiment was to prompt worship, mostly of the silent sort, at the altar of the Unknowable. It was plain that in a world of mechanical forces, in which man himself, with his mysterious self-consciousness, was but a marvellously evolved product, there was no place for religion. Comte tried to fill the blank with a religion of Humanity, but mankind will not readily adopt a religion which throws no light upon life's mysteries, and which refuses any contact with the source of things. If the religious sentiment was to be justified, clearly the first thing to be done was to show the inadequacy of the materialistic conception of the Universe and man. In this connection high place

must be accorded to the life-work of the late Dr Martineau.

Those familiar with the philosophic side of Darwinian literature know that thinkers like Huxley rested their Agnosticism on a metaphysical theory compounded of the views of Hume and Kant. The two fundamental questions of philosophy are (1) How do we know? and (2) What do we know? Hume's answer was that knowledge consists of impressions made upon the mind, which is bounded by the external world,—impressions bound together by custom, or, as James Mill and his school would say, by association of ideas. Whether these impressions correspond to the outer world we cannot tell. Kant at this point agreed with Hume, with the addition that the mind by its inherent structure played an important part in knowledge. What do we know? All we know, said Kant,—and in this he was followed by Hamilton,—is things in their relation to one another: of things in themselves we know nothing. In other words, the mind is tied to phenomena. Modern Materialism, or more properly, Naturalism, founded its Agnosticism on the Humian theory of Knowledge, which

made it impossible for the mind to rise above phenomena. Martineau saw clearly that until this theory of Knowledge was demolished there could be no rational basis for religion. If all our knowledge is resolvable into the registering of phenomena along the line of association of ideas, plainly we cannot legitimately rise to the idea of Cause: all we can do is to note the fact that one thing follows another. Thus we find the late Dr Bain objecting to the common phrase that a flying cannon-ball has "power to batter walls." He would have us keep to the known facts, that of battered walls following from the contact of flying cannon-balls. The crucial question is this: Is the idea of Cause legitimate or illegitimate? If the latter, then there is no escape from the agnostic view that beyond phenomena we can know nothing, not even inferentially. If, on the other hand, the idea of Cause is legitimate, we have a starting-point for a knowledge of existence beyond phenomena.

Martineau's analysis of the causal idea is distinguished by great thoroughness. After a searching examination of the various arguments of the Agnostics by whom the causal idea is

treated as delusive, Martineau comes to the conclusion that cause is not the assemblage of phenomenal antecedents, but has a really dynamical character,—is not a set of conditions, but is an efficient power. That J. S. Mill should have anchored his mind upon the Empiricism of the school of Hume and James Mill is not to be wondered at, seeing that his philosophical creed was matured before the rise of the theory of Evolution; but it is matter of surprise that thinkers of the Huxley type should have stuck to Hume just at the time when the evolutionary view of the Universe was showing the inadequacy of the old Empiricism. Spencer, who is usually ranked with the Agnostics, in his philosophy reached a view of Causation quite on the lines of Martineau's theory. Viewing the Universe not as a collection of particular objects linked together by inexplicable association, but as a unity in which things were organically united,—were, indeed, not independent existences at all, but temporary manifestations of Force,—Spencer was driven to the conclusion that all phenomena were resolvable into the redistribution of matter

and motion. These, again, in an ultimate analysis were reducible to Force. Science, with its doctrine of the Conservation and Transformation of Force, bears out Spencer's conclusion. Phenomena are not forms of existence whose mutual relations alone we can know, and beyond which we cannot go. Phenomena have no meaning apart from the dynamic power of which they are manifestations. Plurality is abolished, and science as well as philosophy is now in presence of one Force, the cause of phenomena. What is this Force? Spencer refuses to describe Force as material: he believes it to be more akin to Spirit than to Matter. He defines it as the Infinite and Eternal Energy from which all things proceed.

Martineau, aided by Spencer,—whose labours in this connection he did not sufficiently appreciate,—completely routed the Empiricism of the Darwinian School. He vindicated the idea of Cause, and paved the way for the recognition of Religion as a rational element in human affairs. Can anything be predicated of this cause, which in scientific language is called Force, or Energy



as it is now termed? Spencer declared that here the mind is in presence of the Unknowable, and made religion consist in simple recognition of the final mystery. Martineau does not stop here. He proceeds to an examination of this scientific ultimate. What conclusions can we draw from the causal idea? Spencer was disposed, as we saw, to identify Force with Spirit rather than with Matter, but he went no farther. Martineau goes farther. Which of the phases of this dynamic power more nearly represent its real nature? Clearly we get nearer an answer when we seek its nature in its highest rather than its lowest manifestation—in Mind. He comes to the conclusion that, philosophically interpreted, the Force of Science resolves itself into Will. The world, in his view, expresses an Infinite Will; its laws are decrees; in deciphering its hieroglyphic we follow up a Divine Intelligence on lines by which it issued forth. From this standpoint Martineau, in the light of the Darwinian theory, goes over the ground of natural theology, and shows that there is nothing in the new theory incompatible with the old argument of Design. “Material causes so called are only material con-

ditions, physical forces but physical means, man's freewill but the unnecessitated agent of a Power that is over all, and in all, and through all."

What foundation is there in all this for religion? So far Martineau has led us only to "a Divine Mind and Will ruling the Universe." How does man stand related to the Divine Mind and Will? Martineau's next step is to examine the structure of the human mind. Through Perception we reach an Intelligent Mind in the Universe; through Conscience we reach a Righteous Mind. Through Conscience the Soul is brought into moral relations with the Righteous Will of the Universe, and at once we enter the sphere of religion. In some passages we are reminded of the deistic conceptions of the eighteenth century, in which God is viewed as external to man, as a lawgiver who imposes His will from an outside source; but Martineau in his deepest moods makes provision for the divine immanence as well as the divine transcendence. "In the very constitution," he says, "of the human soul there is provision for an immediate apprehension of God. . . . All that we believe without us we must first feel within us." In Martineau's

religion we have the unique combination of philosophic thought, ethical fervour, and mystical aspiration. In the act of defending his own Unitarian faith, Martineau made great contributions to the philosophy of religion.

In Germany the idea of Evolution took a form different from that which obtained in this country. While the Darwinian conception of evolution was pressed into the service of Materialism, and meant the death of religion, in Germany the Hegelian conception of evolution became the parent of a new form of Idealism, which promised philosophic explanation and justification of the orthodox form of religion. Hegel seemed to have proved historically that the march of the human intelligence, when interpreted philosophically, led logically to acceptance of just those doctrines which theologians had deduced from the Bible. Hegel found room in his theological philosophy for the Trinity, the Incarnation, and the Atonement,—the three doctrines which, to the Rationalist school, were peculiarly repugnant. The triumph of the union of orthodoxy with philosophy was short-lived. Strauss, a keen disciple of Hegel, came to believe that religion was not secure till it was

released from purely historical conditions, and in the form of the "Idea" made to shine with its own light. In applying the Hegelian formula to Christianity, Strauss was led to eliminate entirely the supernatural, and with it all idea of revelation, and soon it began to be seen that Hegelianism was a foe in the guise of a friend.

In this country, especially in Scotland, an effort was made to dissociate Hegelianism from Rationalism. Thinkers like Dr Hutchison Stirling and the late Dr Caird endeavoured to combine the supernatural element in Christianity and the Hegelian philosophy. In the hands of men like Dr Edward Caird, the Master of Balliol, the late Professor Green, and a number of other English thinkers, Hegelianism was used to undermine Christian beliefs. At the same time, it should not be forgotten that Hegelianism did a great service to religion by its thorough examination of the categories of science and its demolition of materialism, by showing that in any philosophy of the Universe not matter but thought must be basal. The value of this new standpoint is seen in the 'Philosophy of Religion' of Otto Pflleiderer, who, though stopping short of the supernatural, applies the

Hegelian principle to outline a Christian Theism which, freed from the ambiguities of speculative Idealism, satisfies at once the demands of philosophy and science.

In Germany the reaction against Hegel took definite form in the philosophy of Lotze, who repudiated entirely the attempt of Hegel to identify Reality with a logical process. Thought, Lotze held, interprets but does not make Reality. His philosophy starts, not with universals, but with particulars. The world is a plurality of things, which find their unity in a single real Being, of whom Lotze predicates personality. Like Kant, Lotze bases his religion on the needs of the ethical nature of man. He reaches the idea of religion, not, like Hegel, by speculative methods, but by a sense of spiritual need ; and in this region he relies not upon logic as a test of truth, but upon what he calls value-judgments. In a word, Lotze substituted for the intellectualism of Hegel the spiritual consciousness as the final interpretation of Reality.

It was reserved to Ritschl to apply resolutely the ideas of Lotze to religious thought. The system of Ritschl may be said to be a combination of Kant's agnosticism and Lotze's value-judgments.



According to Ritschl, religion should have nothing to do with metaphysics. Its field is history. History presents us with a great personality,—Christ, the founder of the kingdom of God. What is the value of Christ to us? Ritschl disposes of the metaphysical beliefs which, owing to the influence of Greek Philosophy, entered into the Christian system. As Mr Galloway, in his suggestive book, ‘Studies in the Philosophy of Religion,’ says: “Instead of the ecclesiastical doctrines of the Trinity, the metaphysical attributes of God, the transcendent nature of Christ, they [Ritschl and his followers] substitute such practical interpretations of these as are made possible by bringing them into organic relation with Christ’s Kingdom as the Supreme end. The eternal and divine nature of Christ, for instance, simply means that He had an eternal place in the divine world-plan which embraced the Kingdom, and that His person has the religious value of God for the Christian community.” The Ritschlian system has been described as theological positivism. As a reaction against the daring flight of Hegel into the region of the Absolute, Ritschlianism met the craving in the

German mind for something tangible within the sphere of history,—something which appealed to the spiritual consciousness as a basis for religion. Sooner or later the religious intelligence will endeavour to solve the problems which Ritschl, in the interests of practical religion, affects to ignore.

In the midst of the chaos of ideas, the clashing of opinions, is it possible to indicate as a result of a century's religious development something like permanent result? Is there a common ground upon which the various schools of religion and theological thought may meet? Is it not possible to discover permanent truths in Calvinism, Broad-Churchism, Unitarianism, Hegelianism, and Ritschlianism, which may find a place in the creed of the future? Is not science pressing to the front the fundamental idea of Calvinism, the sovereignty of God, and the sacredness of law? In regard to God, is not the science of to-day proclaiming in unmistakable tones the Hegelian doctrine of the Absolute as the inner life of all reality? And what is the modern passion for democracy, with its demand for equality, but a political form of the idea of brotherhood upon

which the Broad Church placed so much stress? What, too, is the modern passion of philanthropy—showing itself in earnest efforts to rescue the fallen, to bind up the broken hearts, and to relieve human suffering—but an unconscious attempt to reproduce the spirit of Jesus Christ and to proclaim Him, in the style of Ritschlianism, the founder and inspirer of the kingdom of God? In brief, amid all diversity of religious and theological opinion, may we not detect practical unanimity on these points—the Sovereignty and Fatherhood of God, the Headship and Leadership of Christ, the brotherhood of man, the dignity of service, salvation through sacrifice, and the kingdom of Righteousness, as the end of all aspiring endeavour, the goal of humanity?

# I N D E X.

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